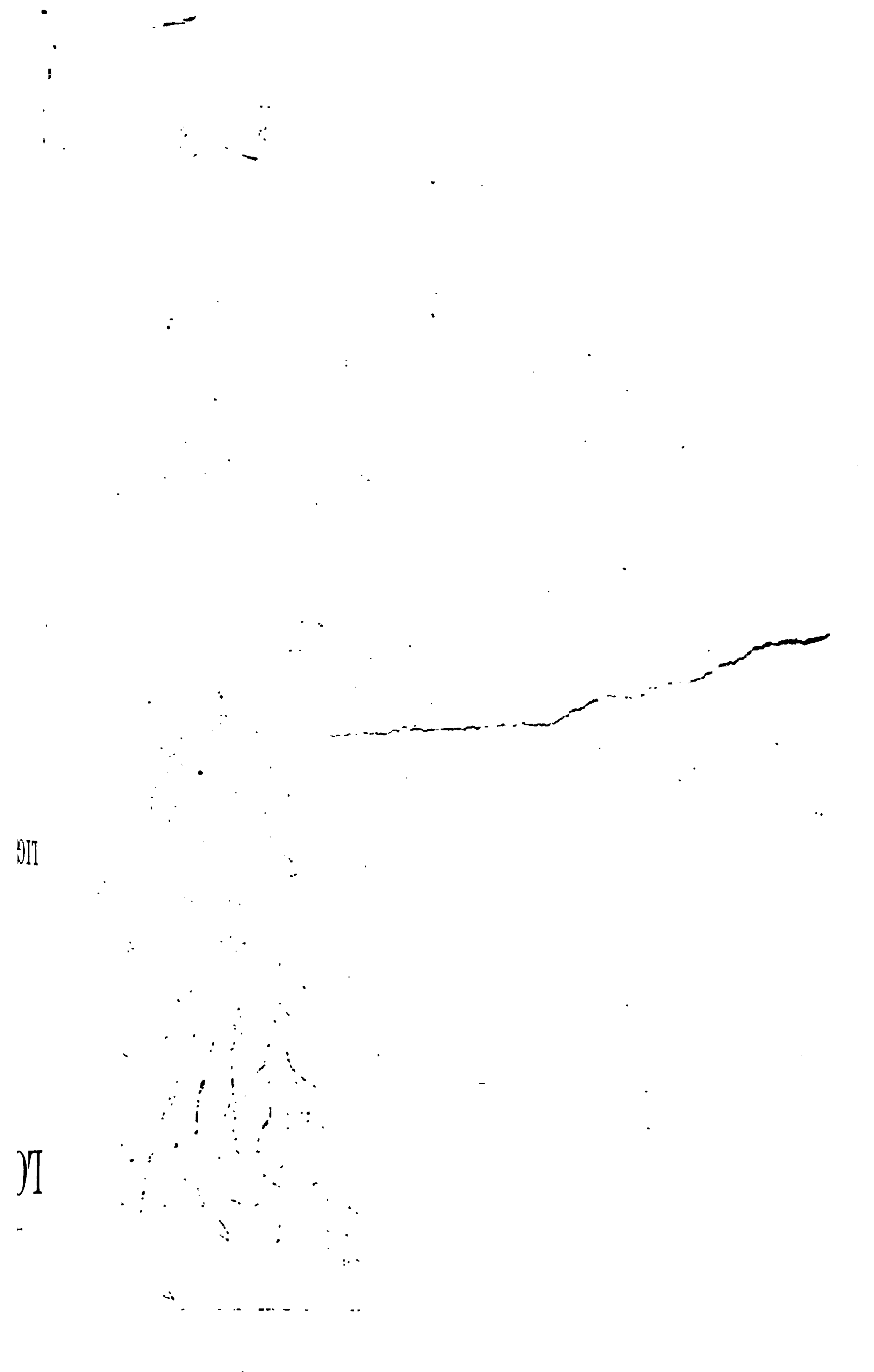

LONDON SOCIETY.

An Illustrated Magazine

OF

LIGHT AND AMUSING LITERATURE

FOR

THE HOURS OF RELAXATION.

VOLUME XXXII.

LONDON:
CROWN BUILDINGS, 188 FLEET STREET.
1877.

LONDON:
ROBSON AND SONS, PRINTERS, PANCRAS ROAD, N.W.

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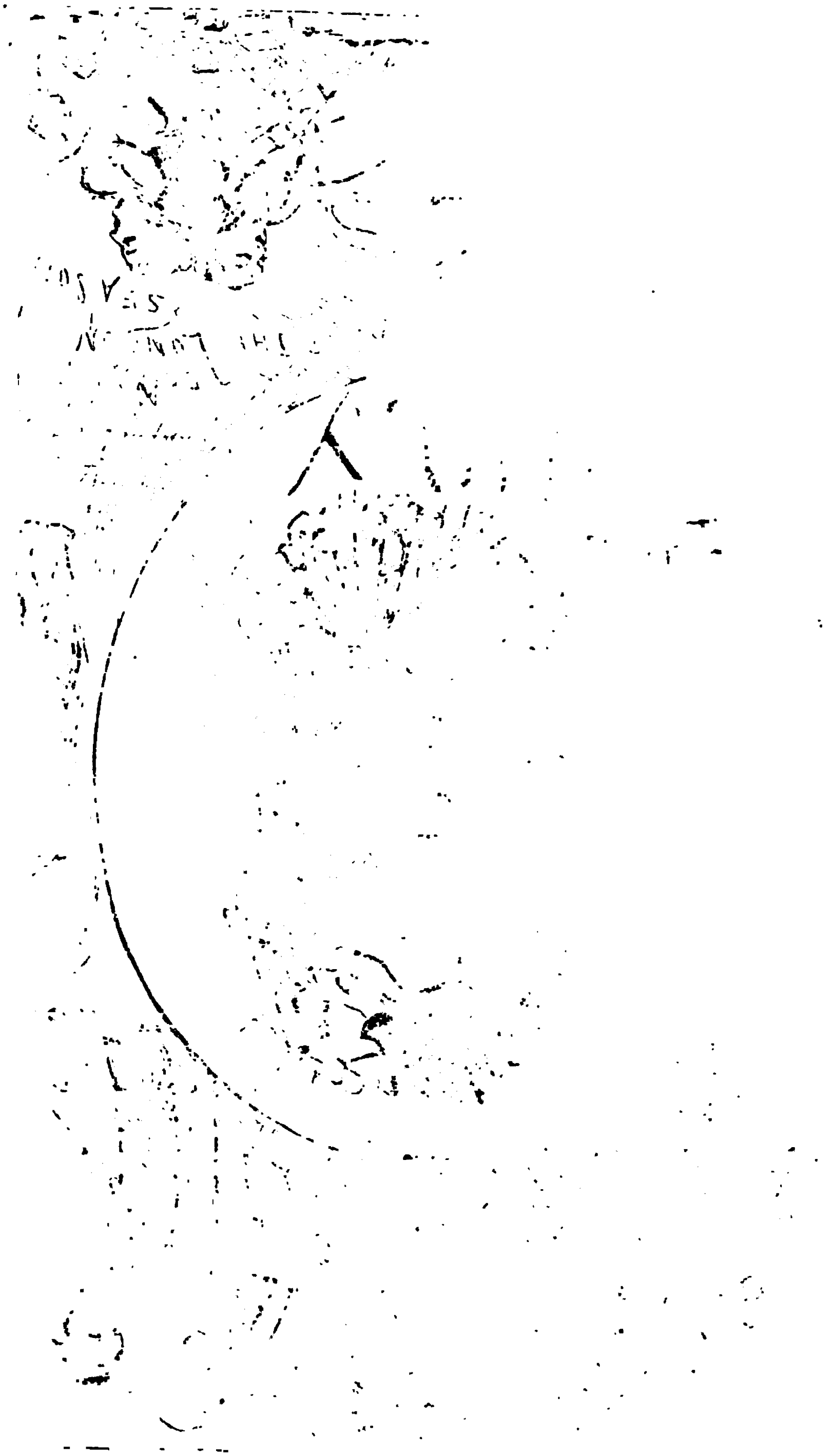


LONDON SOCIETY.

JULY 1877.

THE FAIR FACE IN THE YELLOW CHARIOT.

A Park Romance of the last London Season.

A BACHELOR still young and well-to-do is for obvious reasons an object of the deepest interest to his friends of the opposite sex. Lord Featherstone was as popular with ladies as if he had been a spirit-rapper, or a Hindoo potentate with diamonds to scatter broadcast and a suppressed begum in the background at home. They were always telling him that it was a sin and a shame the blinds in the town house should be constantly down; the hall filled only with shooting-parties; the jewels buried in the strong room at the bank.

And his heart! What a priceless jewel was that for some sweet maiden to win and wear! Seared affections? Ridiculous prudery! He had been a desperate flirt, no doubt; what matter? All men were flirts; many with less excuse than Lord Featherstone, who, as an excellent *parti*, like the Sovereign, could do no wrong. He had been wild, perhaps; but a man might be wild and yet not wicked; while for those who are their own fathers, enjoying their own titles and their own estates, the world makes ample concessions. When the time came for settling down, there would not be a happier or more fortunate girl in the three kingdoms than she whom the Marquis of Featherstone elected to make his wife.

Only he would not settle down. He meant to have his fling first; and probably it was his habit of throwing himself about that made him so difficult to catch. He was as wary as an old cockatoo; prompt to cut himself free from the most serious entanglements. After making hot love for a week during wet weather in a country house, papa and mamma heard that he had broken his leg in two places, or that typhoid fever had laid him low. His last affair was with a gay widow, who thought him safely hooked; but at the last moment he sent a postcard, conveying brief regrets, and sailed in his yacht for the South Seas.

He was absent after this for two or three years; but presently, wearying of the constant wandering to and fro, he returned, and took up the threads of his old life. The season was at its height, if that lugubrious season of 1876 can be said to have ever risen

above a dead level of lugubrious dulness. His friends said he was a fool to come back. Never had there been a season so 'slow;' nothing going on—not a creature in town.

'Looks like it!' thought Lord Featherstone, as he tried to make his way through the serried ranks upon the stairs in a certain mansion in Grosvenor-square. The Duchess of Welshpool was 'at home,' and many of her guests wished they could say the same. In the entrance-hall men and women stood a dozen deep, pressing slowly towards the grand staircase, where two streams clashed together, flushed dancers coming down for cooling drinks, and the new arrivals eager to bow their bow, and in their turn come away. Now and again there was a positive dead lock. It was idle to say, 'Excuse me,' or 'You are on a lady's dress,' or 'Would you allow me to pass?' Until the wave surged onward every one was suspended, and held fast *in situ*, as if suddenly frozen cold. Not that the metaphor held good; for the atmosphere reminded Featherstone of the tropics he had just left.

A crush of this kind is especially favourable for the minute observation of one's fellow-creatures. Half a minute was enough to solve the mystery of Mrs. Chromer's yellow hair, and of the complexion people said was like milk. Little Penteagle's wig, again, could not be disguised, nor the high colour which old General Bawcock resolutely denied was *rouge*. But these sights, although curious, were not enthralling to a man who had just seen Fusiama and the Taj Mahal; and Lord Featherstone was on the point of turning tail and leaving the house when a bright face in the crowd arrested his attention, and he resolved to stay—at least until he could ascertain to whom it belonged.

It was quite a new face to him; the face of a girl still fresh, and seemingly unaccustomed to the town. A merry *piquante* face, with small but perfect features, violet eyes, and a laughing mouth, showing often the whitest teeth. A face strikingly beautiful, but innocent and childish, just as the ways of its owner were unconventional and unconstrained. She laughed outright once; he could hear her quite plainly, and saw her shake out her curls in the plenitude of her merriment. A most bewitching captivating young person, and Featherstone was determined to find out who she was. Surely some one could introduce him.

He looked round in vain. No one near at hand whom he knew well enough to ask to do the needful. Quite half an hour elapsed before he caught Tommy Cutler, who knew all the world, and then, going to where he had last seen the girl, they found she had disappeared.

'Most provoking!' he said. 'Can't you tell me who she is?'

'Who's who in 1876! Which who do you mean? You must be more precise.'

'She had gray—'

'Hair? That's coming in. I shall wear mine white soon; it gives one an air of wisdom.'

'You want it. But there—there she goes! Come on, man!'

And he moved away rapidly when another voice, speaking in soft, almost caressing, tones, stopped him.

'Lord Featherstone—back in civilisation! When did you arrive?'

'A few days ago,' he replied nonchalantly, as he shook hands. 'What a delightful dance!' and

he proceeded to hurry on in pursuit.

But Lady Carstairs was an old flame; one who had helped to bring him out as a lad, who had encouraged and petted him, and, to tell the truth, flirted with him enough to make Sir John jealous had he been a sillier man. She did not mean to be passed by now with a few words.

'Pray give me your arm, Lord Featherstone. I should like to hear some of your adventures. I am not interfering, I hope?'

'I was going to dance—'

'You dance! What new miracle is this? Who is the charmer who has led you astray?'

'He's smitten,' said Tommy Cutler. 'All of a heap. Some new face.'

'A new face is more attractive than an old friend,' said Lady Carstairs rather bitterly.

'Old friends sometimes have new faces. Mrs. Chromer, for instance, who changes hers like the chameleon does his skin. But perhaps you can enlighten me—'

And he described the face which had so strongly attracted him.

'It won't do, Lord Featherstone. Very charming, I daresay, but conveys nothing to my mind. Golden hair, blue eyes, drab dress, and yellow trimmings—there are a dozen such here to-night. It was a pretty face, eh? Yes, that will be the end of it. You particular men, after years of the most fastidious fault-finding, surrender to some doll's face, merely pretty without expression. But after all, it's high time you took a wife; it is, indeed.'

'I nearly did abroad.'

'A savage? a squaw?'

'Yes; one of the carraway-seed Indians from the western slopes of the Alleghanies. She was very fashionable; wore false hair—the scalps of her enemies inherited from her father.'

'An heirloom, I suppose,' said Lady Carstairs, who thought herself a wit.

'A very economical young person, who could dine off Brazil nuts, and who had no dressmaker's bill—to speak of.'

'What a pity you did not bring her to Court! She would have made a sensation! But we could do better than this for you; only you behave so badly to them all. There was Millicent—'

'No man likes to be told of his sins. Some day I will come and confess them, and you shall give me absolution. Now, I think I shall go to Pratt's.'

They had walked through the rooms quite without success. The young lady of whom they were in search had doubtless left the ball. What matter? Next morning he would have forgotten this fair face altogether.

It was curious how quickly Lord Featherstone had resumed the old yoke. Not many weeks ago he was living a half-savage life in far-off wilds, hobnobbing with Red Indians, paddling his own canoe among the islands of the South Pacific, doing everywhere as the natives did; and now once more he became a fashionable Londoner, and did as everybody did in town. After breakfast a canter in the Park, meeting there friends, male and female, of whom the former offered him the odds, the latter carried him home to lunch; later, a look in at Hurlingham or at Lillie Bridge, back to some favourite boudoir for a quiet præcenal tea, a sumptuous dinner, a glimpse at the Opera or 'the House,' balls, drums, at home—anything that might be going, and the best of what there was.

'What a slave I am!' he was

saying, as he jogged slowly towards the Row some days after the Duchess of Welshpool's ball. 'I say each season shall be my last, but I cannot stay away from three in succession. Here am I at it again; sucked into the Maelström already, and swimming round like an empty hen-coop or a light-headed cork. But what else can I do? Politics—the game is not worth the candle; science—I'm not clever enough; art—I haven't the special gifts; travel—I've tried it; literature—every one—soldiers, shoeblacks, dowagers, and *dames de comptoir*—writes books; philanthropy—no faith, phil-womanthropy is more in my line. And yet I've never been really bitten yet. They're too eager, all of them; and the mothers force the running so. If I could only meet some simple little woman who'd take me for myself, and not because I was a good *parti*, I'd marry her out of hand, I would, and settle down. Marriage is a real solid occupation, and I'd like to try it, if I could only meet with the right sort of girl. But where is she to be found?'

He had been riding on at a sharp canter, which increased, as he left the more frequented parts of the Row, to a hand-gallop. So by the Serpentine, past the Magazine, round by the Upper Row, towards the Marble Arch, and he was galloping still as he turned southward meaning only to draw rein when he neared the Achilles statue and joined once more in the crowd.

But an unexpected vision suddenly arrested his course.

'By Jove! That face again!' Yes, the girl he had seen but a few nights since; the fair fresh young face which had taken his fancy by storm. She was alone, seated in a quaint old-fashioned yellow chariot, a ramshackle mediæval conveyance, probably as old as the hills. It hung on high springs of an antiquated pattern, its lining was of faded purple, its hammercloth had a fringe of tarnished gilding, its coachman was an aged retainer, with a mottled face, and livery that showed white at the seams; while the horses he drove were long past mark of teeth; a fossil carriage which had lain for centuries at rest, and which when dug up should have gone to a museum, and not, as now, into active life.

Strange contrast, this bright child; spring rose-buds on her cheeks and innocence in every line of her smiling face, alone in a vehicle better suited to a dowager or a duchess of the older school. A country-bred girl, of course; such fresh beauty is denied to Londoners. But where had she come from; who could she be?

He was determined to find out this time. With that idea he turned his horse's head and gave immediate chase. The carriage would doubtless travel by the conventional route, across the Serpentine bridge, and back to the crowded Drive. There chance would certainly provide a friend to tell him what he wanted to know.

But, to his surprise, the chariot passed out at the Marble Arch, and left the Park. There was no time to lose. He pursued, promptly, along Oxford-street to the Circus, up Langham-place into Portland-place, sharp to the right by Weymouth-street into Albany-street, and so to Park-street. Here the coachman, as one not intimately acquainted with London, made, as it seemed, a false turn. He got into Gloucester-road, and at the end of it had to cross by the Chalk-farm Station, and back towards the Kentish

Town-road. This regained he followed northward, and reaching the Hampstead road began to breast the hill.

What could have brought this young lady so far out of town? Business, pleasure, or mere desire for change of air and scene? While Featherstone was still debating, the carriage stopped short in front of a modest cottage. Presently an old gentleman issued forth and assisted the girl to alight. There was no footman, and as she went into the house she said loud enough for Featherstone to hear, 'In an hour's time, Gregory;' then she disappeared. Under her arm was a portfolio, in the other hand an unmistakable colour-box. Of course, she had come out for a drawing-lesson; equally of course, when it was over, she would return to town.

Riding slowly to and fro, Featherstone waited while the time slipped by. The chariot, which had gone no further than a neighbouring 'public,' returned, and drew up in front of the cottage. Presently the young lady accompanied by her drawing-master came out, shook hands, jumped into the carriage, and was driven off.

Now, for the first time, Featherstone became aware that the coachman had been drinking, and was almost too unsteady to sit upon his box.

'The rascal! To take advantage of his young mistress being all by herself. She ought to be put upon her guard. Something's bound to happen. I really ought to look after her.'

The coachman's erratic course soon proved that there was some ground for these forebodings. The pace at which he drove down the hill was break-neck, and his steering infamous. He had sea-room certainly, all the ample space of a wide suburban thoroughfare; but no road is wide enough to be traversed in long tacks, as if beating up against a head wind. Very soon too the coachman attracted attention and much derisive chaff. 'Where's that garden-rake?' 'Who put you on the box, Mr. Bottlewasher?' 'Why don't you buy a mangle or turn chimney-sweep?' remarks calculated to raise the ire of the bibulous, and which our Jehu resented by glaring round in speechless semi-comical indignation, to the utter and more perilous neglect of his driving. Already by the merest shave he had weathered an apple-woman's stall; next he was nearly in collision with a light cart; then he was all but wrecked upon a heavy brewer's dray.

It was really time to interfere. Featherstone rode up rapidly.

'You're not fit to drive! You're endangering this lady's life. Here,' he turned to the ubiquitous 'Bobby' who had already cropped up as fast as does the mushroom in rank soil after rain—'I give this fellow into custody. Take him, carriage and all. My name is Lord Featherstone.'

Policemen have immense respect for peers of the realm.

'Very good, my lord. But there ain't room for these horses and all in a police-cell.'

'And pray what is to become of me?' said a small voice, a little tremulous in its tones, but not without asperity. 'Am I to be given into custody too?'

Featherstone took off his hat.

'A thousand apologies. My interference would have been unpardonable but for the gravity of the situation. If you will but tell me what you wish—'

'To go home of course, as soon as possible. My aunt will be in terror.'

'This rascal cannot drive you: he won't be fit, for hours.'

'I certainly shall not wait hours. I must walk—or find another coachman.—O Gregory,' she looked reproachfully at the old reprobate, 'the last time you promised to take the pledge; and yet now—'

'O Miss Kiss,' he spluttered out, as if quite alive to the enormity of his sins, 'the brew was good, and I'd so long to wait—'

'If I might make so bold,' said S 1002, 'there's good livery stables at the Chequers. You might put the carriage up, or get another driver there.'

A very sensible suggestion, adopted forthwith.

The chariot was conveyed thither in safety. Featherstone dismounted, then helped the young lady to descend.

'They will show you to a private sitting-room. You are not very much alarmed, I trust?'

'I ought not to be,' she replied, hanging her head. 'You are so kind. But how long shall I have to wait?'

'Not a second longer than I can help,' he said gallantly.

Nor had she; the landlord produced a man in the conventional drab coat, warranted to drive a pair, and within ten minutes the chariot was ready to resume its journey.

Lord Featherstone went up to say so.

'I trust you will have no more *contretemps*.' He spoke gravely. 'This new coachman is sober, but he is of course an utter stranger.'

There was a shade of misgiving in his voice, which had the desired effect.

'Dear, dear, suppose he too should play some trick. I *ought not* to have come alone. Aunty said so. What shall I do now?'

'If you would accept me as an escort—'

How deep he was!

'Only too thankfully. But it would be trespassing too much upon your good-nature. You have been so kind already.'

Such a sweet grateful little soul, with such a soft pleasing voice. She was absolutely charming.

'I must go back to town. If you will give me a seat—'

'But you have your horse. If you would only ride close behind, it would do.'

'My horse has gone lame in two legs.'

It was a wonder he hadn't developed navicular laminitis and farcy.

'Then I shall be doing you a service really?' she cried, with animation.

'Distinctly.'

Then they got in together and drove off.

For a time neither spoke. Featherstone felt upon his good behaviour; he was disposed to be as deferential as to a royal princess. His companion was a little shy at first and tongue-tied, but this could not last. She was a chatterbox by nature, and soon broke the ice.

'Do you think he knows where to take us?' she asked.

'Not unless you've told him.'

'Don't *you* know?'

'How should I? To London, I suppose.'

'That's a wide address,' and she laughed aloud. 'No, Kensington-square; that's where we live, Lord Featherstone.'

He started.

'You know my name, then?'

Artful young person, why did not she confess to this sooner?

'Of course; I heard you tell the policeman.'

'That's well; now may I know yours?'

'Kiss.'

Good heavens! Featherstone

was near saying, 'Kiss? Kiss whom? Kiss her?'

'Kiss Legh; that's my name. It's short—'

'And sweet.' Featherstone could not check himself.

'Short,' she went on, seemingly unconscious, 'for Keziah. We come of an old Quaker stock on the borders, between Shropshire and Montgomeryshire. My father and mother are dead; all my people are dead. I went to school in France, and now I've come to London to be finished.'

She prattled on now, frank, fluent, and unaffected.

'And how do you like it?'

'What? London?'

'No; being finished.'

'I haven't got to the end yet. That'll be when I'm married. But there is not much chance of that, yet a while.'

'Why not?' asked Featherstone, highly amused.

'I don't like anybody well enough.'

'Perhaps nobody's asked you?'

'Indeed, lots have. Herbert Fitzwygram—he is our cousin—he did, and Robert Fox did, and—' she guessed from his face that he was laughing at her, and she stopped abruptly.

'You are quite a stranger, Lord Featherstone, and you have no right to ask me such questions.'

'Well, I won't; we'll talk about something different. We're getting into the streets. Do you know this part of London? It's called Kentish Town, because it's in Middlesex.'

She smiled. Evidently she was not one of those who bore malice long.

'I'm not well up in London geography. It's my first visit to town.'

'I wish it was *my* last.'

'Do you hate it so much?'

'I'm tired to death of it. All the gaieties, the perpetual round of parties, balls—'

'O, I do love a ball! I've only been to one.'

'I saw you.'

She turned her eyes on him, wide open, to see if he were telling the truth.

'But you didn't know me then. How could you tell? And why weren't you introduced?'

'Next time I will be. Will you give me a dance or two?'

'A dozen if you like.'

A very artless and original young lady, certainly.

But now they were once more in Oxford-street, and the job coachman headed, as in duty bound, by the shortest route for Kensington-square.

'He's taking us through the Park!' cried Featherstone, in some consternation.

'Yes; why not? I am glad of it. It's pleasanter than the streets.'

'O, if you prefer it. Only—'

He was thinking that it was now well on in the afternoon, and the Park would be crammed. For the girl's sake it would be better they should not be seen thus publicly together, and alone. For his own also; few men like to be carted round the Drive in a carriage, least of all in such an antiquated conveyance as this old yellow chariot with its high springs.

'We'll go out at Hyde Park Corner then.'

'No, no; I love the Drive best. Perhaps the Princess will be out; and I like to see the other people, and you can tell me who they all are.'

Like a martyr he succumbed. It was best to put a good face on the matter. Perhaps, too, he would not be observed, and with this idea he rather hung back in the carriage, and tried to hide behind his fair companion.

She, on the other hand, was in the highest glee. Chattering, criticising, laughing aloud as the chariot crawled slowly along with the stream: talking of bonnets and costumes; calling this a queer old woman and that a strange-looking thing; continually asking questions, and insisting upon categorical replies. Featherstone could not help himself. He looked at the places she indicated, made out individuals, caught the amused glances and half 'chaffy' nods of those who made him out in return, and by degrees realised that, for his sins, he had been recognised by at least half the fashionable world. Before night it would be all over London that Beau Featherstone had turned into a chaperon for country cousins, or that he had been taken captive by a fair face in a yellow 'shay.'

He was inclined to be a little stiff and cold in his farewells spoken at the door in Kensington-square. But then the pretty protestations of gratitude and thanks so volubly poured out by Miss Keziah Legh quite overcame him. He actually promised to call the following day, although he felt it was much better he should not. The temptation was, however, irresistible. She was so sweet and pleasant, so sympathetic, so unaffected, so unlike the other girls about, that he certainly must see her again. As he walked homewards, full of these thoughts, he ran up against Tommy Cutler near the Albert Hall.

'Halloa! been to Kensington-square?'

Featherstone visibly shuddered. Tommy Cutler knew all about it, then, already.

'Saw you in the Park, my lord. Understand now why you were so keen the other night about flaxen hair and bright-blue eyes, and only seventeen.'

'Don't be an ass!' cried Featherstone angrily. 'Here, hansom!' and his lordship drove on to Brooks's.

'Here is Featherstone himself,' said a man, in the bay-window; 'we'll ask him. I say, they're betting five to four you've started a yellow chariot, and were seen in it in the Park.'

'Did you pick it up in Japan?'

'Is it the coach Noah drove home in when he landed from the ark?'

Featherstone abruptly left the room. The absurd story was evidently on the wing. More serious was the next onslaught.

'You ought not to have done it, Featherstone,' said old Mr. Primrose, who had been his father's friend, and presumed therefore to give the son advice. 'You have compromised the girl seriously; and she is such an absolute child.'

'Excuse me; I am not called upon to give account to you of all my actions.'

'You ought not, I repeat, to have appeared with her thus publicly. It was bad enough to take her down to Richmond; but to put your arm round her waist openly in the Park—'

'Really, Mr. Primrose!' Featherstone's face flushed, but he restrained himself.

He knew gossip grew like a rank weed, and he wished to root up this scandal at once and kill it outright.

'I may as well tell you at once: that young lady is about to become my wife. Under these circumstances, I presume no one can find fault with what happened this afternoon, which, nevertheless, is grossly exaggerated—that you must also allow me to say.'

'Featherstone, I beg your pardon, and I give you joy. I knew something of these Leghs; not

over-wealthy, but charming people. I am heartily glad to think this girl has done so well and so soon. Is it to be announced at once?'

'Well, not exactly at once,' said Featherstone, thinking perhaps it would be as well to consult the young lady herself. Of course she would say 'Yes;' but as a matter of form he ought to ask her.

There was another ordeal in store for him that same night. Lady Carstairs could not be silenced so easily as Mr. Primrose.

'Well,' she said—it was at a reception at the Foreign Office—'the guile of modern girls passes all conception. If Mother Eve had lived in these times, the serpent would have had no chance.'

'What new proof have we of the desperate wickedness of your sex?'

'I did not think you would fall so easily into the trap. But old campaigners think themselves armour-plated by experience; and it's a novel line of attack.' He looked at her in amazement. 'Fastness is no new trait in young ladies.'

'Nor in old ones,' put in Lord Featherstone.

'Thank you. But no woman of my time ever went to the length of compromising herself as the most effective method of hooking her man. This Miss Legh—'

'I beg you will not mention her name.'

'This Miss Legh,' went on Lady Carstairs, bitterly hostile still, 'although but a girl, might give lessons to all the veteran flirts in the kingdom. I've heard all about it.'

'All, and probably more.'

'Captain Cutler saw you leaving the Star and Garter together; I myself saw you in the Park. That any girl could allow herself to be thus affichéed with a character like Lord Featherstone—'

'I'm obliged to you, Lady Carstairs, for your good opinion; but instead of defending myself, I'll take up the gauntlet for Miss Legh.'

And he told the story exactly as it had occurred.

'She did it on purpose,' Lady Carstairs said promptly.

'Came out on purpose to meet me in the Park? Made me follow her on purpose to Hampstead? Made her coachman drink too much beer on purpose, and pressed me to drive back with her to town?'

'Not quite all that, perhaps. But it would be her game to get you to go through the Park with her. Was it not at her express request—come now, confess—that you appeared with her in the most public place in the town?'

He did remember that Miss Legh had insisted upon going through the Park. Could it be that she wished to parade herself by his side, and be thus observed of all the world? Surely not; yet—

'You wrong her,' he said chivalrously. Whatever he might suspect, he would make no admission that might do her harm. 'All the blame in this matter is mine, and mine alone; and I am resolved to make her all the reparation in my power.'

'What may that amount to?'

'To asking her in set form to become my wife.'

'Lord Featherstone, you would never be so foolish! A more ridiculous notion I never heard.'

'*Noblesse oblige.*'

'It's purely suicidal, uncalled for, unnecessary; you must not sacrifice yourself and your whole life.'

'Perhaps it is no sacrifice.'

'Am I to understand that you have fallen in love—at last? That

this mere child, this chit out of the schoolroom, has brought you to her feet? I refuse to believe it.'

'I am in earnest, I assure you. I shall marry her if she will only say "Yes."'

'Say "Yes!"' cried Lady Carstairs, with a scornful laugh; 'what girl in her sober senses would refuse Lord Featherstone?'

Probably in his own heart he had little doubt that his offer would be well received. This rather increased a sentiment of self-glorification, which was taking possession of him as a reward for his disinterestedness. That he who might pick and choose where he pleased should throw himself away from a mere spasm of chivalrous generosity was perhaps more than was expected of him. Nevertheless, it was pleasant to do the right thing; and his satisfaction was increased as he pictured to himself this little Keziah, with her bright eyes and laughing mouth, full of grateful thanks for the honour he meant to do her.

It was quite with the air of the grand seigneur that he presented himself next day in Kensington-square. To his surprise he was not very well received.

There had been a scene between Keziah and her aunt directly the former reëntered the house on the previous evening. The girl, without attempting to withhold one iota of information, had given her aunt a full account of what had occurred—the coachman's misconduct, the danger only averted by the timely intervention of a strange gentleman, who had kindly escorted her home.

'His name was Lord Featherstone.'

'That wretch!' instantly cried Miss Parker, an old maid, prim and precise in her appearance and in all her ways, yet not disinclined to listen to at least half the scandalous gossip in circulation through the world.

'Do you know him, aunt Parker?'

'Who does not? He is a notoriously wicked man—'

She stopped short, feeling that the epithet could only be substantiated by details which it was better Keziah should not hear.

'I thought him very nice.' Keziah spoke defiantly and very firmly in defence of her new friend.

'Of course you did. He can be most agreeable. I have heard that of him over and over again. That's the danger of him.'

'He was so kind and obliging. He told me who everybody was in the Park—'

'Can it be possible that you were so mad as to go into the Park with him in the afternoon, when it was crowded, when hundreds must have seen you together?'

'Of course we came through the Park together; it was the shortest way home. I cannot see any great harm in that.'

'It's not likely; you are so young and inexperienced; you can see no harm in anything. But he knew the mischief he was doing, only too well. The wretch, the wretch!' Mild Miss Parker would have been glad to see wild horses tear him limb from limb. 'However,' after a pause, 'you must promise me faithfully that you will never speak to him again.'

'He said he would call just to inquire how I was,' Keziah said, in a low voice, which might easily have meant that she hoped he would not be told peremptorily to go away.

'*I* will see him if he comes,' aunt Parker finally replied. 'It is not fitting he should pursue his acquaintance with you, begun as

it was under such questionable auspices.'

And in this decision Keziah was forced to acquiesce.

When therefore, after some delay and demur, Lord Featherstone was admitted to aunt Parker, her manner was perfectly arctic. She sat bolt upright, with a stony look in her eyes and only frigid monosyllables on her lips.

'I called,' said his lordship, with much *aplomb*, 'to see Miss Legh.'

'Yes?' aunt Parker asked, much as though Lord Featherstone was the bootmaker's man, or had come to take orders for a sewing-machine.

'My name is Lord Featherstone.'

'Is it?' He might have been in the habit of assuming a dozen aliases every twenty-four hours, so utterly indifferent and incredulous was aunt Parker's tone.

'It was my good fortune to be able to do Miss Legh a slight service yesterday,' he went on, still unabashed.

'A service!' Miss Parker waxed indignant at once. 'I call it an injury—a shameful, mischievous, unkind act; for which Lord Featherstone, although I apprehend it is not much in his line, should blush for very shame.'

'Really, madam,'—he hardly knew whether to be annoyed or amused,—'I think you have been misinformed. Probably, but for me, Miss Legh's neck would have been broken.'

'I know that, I know that, and I almost wish it had, sooner than that she should have so far forgotten herself.' Miss Parker looked up suddenly and sharply, saying with much emphasis, 'O Lord Featherstone, ask yourself—you are, or ought to be, a gentleman, at least you know the world by heart—was it right of you to take such an advantage? Did you think what incalculable harm this foolish thoughtless mistake—which is certain to be magnified by malicious tongues—may work against an innocent guileless child?'

'I know I was greatly to blame. I ought to have known better. But it was Miss Legh's own wish to go through the Park, and I gave way.'

'How noble of you to shift the burden on to her shoulders! But we will not, if you please, try to apportion the blame. The mischief is done, and there is no more to be said, except to ask you to make us the only reparation in your power?'

'And that is—?' he looked at her in surprise. She did not surely mean to forestall him, and demand that which he came to offer of his own accord?

'To leave the house, and to spare us henceforth the high honour of your acquaintance.'

'That I promise if you still insist after you have heard what I am going to say. I came to make reparation full and complete, but not in the way you suppose. I came to make Miss Legh—and if she and you, as her guardian, will deign to accept of it—an offer of my hand.'

Little Miss Parker's face was an amusing study. Her lower lip dropped, her eyes opened till they looked like the round marbles on a solitaire-board.

'Lord Featherstone, you!'

'I trust you will not consider me ineligible; that you have no objection to me personally, beyond a natural annoyance at this silly escapade.'

'It is so sudden, so unexpected—so—so—' Poor Miss Parker was too much bewildered to find words, a thousand thoughts agitated her. This was a splendid offer, a princely offer. Match-

maker by instinct, as is every woman in the world, she could not fail to perceive what dazzling prospects it opened up for her niece. But, then, could any happiness follow from such a hastily-concluded match? These latter and better thoughts prevailed.

'Lord Featherstone, it is out of the question, or at least you must wait. Say a month or two, or till the end of the season.'

'The engagement ought to be announced immediately to benefit Miss Legh.'

'And that is your real reason for proposing? Lord Featherstone, I retract my harsh words; you shall not outdo us in generosity. We cannot accept your offer, although we appreciate the spirit in which it is made.'

'I assure you, Miss Parker, I esteem Miss Legh most highly. I like her immensely; I am most anxious to marry her.'

The bare possibility that he might be refused—he of all men in the world—gave a stronger insistence to his words.

Miss Parker shook her head.

'No good could come of such a marriage; you hardly know each other. You say you like her, perhaps so; but can you tell whether she likes you?'

'At least let me ask her? Do not deny me that. I will abide by her answer.'

There was no resisting such pleading as this.

'I may prepare her for what she is to expect?' asked aunt Parker, as she moved towards the door.

'No, no; please, do not. Let me speak my own way.'

He did not distrust the old lady, but she might indoctrinate Keziah with her views, and prejudice her against him. It was becoming a point of honour with him to succeed, and he thought he could. He was no novice in these matters; ere now he had often held the victory in an issue more difficult than this in his grasp, and all he wanted now was a fair field and no favour.

'Aunt Parker said I was never to speak to you again,' Kiss said, as she came into the room, with an air of extreme astonishment; 'and now she sends me to you of her own accord! What does it mean?'

'It means that I have something very particular to say to you.'

They had shaken hands, and she had taken her seat very demurely a little way off. Her eyes were, however, fixed on his in very steadfast inquiry. They were beautiful eyes, but as changeful as they were bright and sparkling. Now wide open with surprise like a child's, next half closed with roguishness, as though the whole world was an excellent joke, which she was enjoying all by herself. Again, on the minutest provocation they would fill and brim over with tears.

'This is delightful! You're better than a box from Mudie's. Is it a story, or a conundrum, or a joke? Go on, Lord Featherstone; do.'

'You are no worse for your drive, I hope?'

'Is that all? Yes; I am ever so much worse—in temper. You should have heard aunt Parker go on! Did anybody scold you?'

'I escaped any very serious rebuke—except from my conscience.'

'Dear me, Lord Featherstone, you make me feel as though I were in church. Was it so very wicked, then, to help me in my distress? I thought it was *most* good of you.'

This simple but italicised earnestness was very taking.

'No; but people are very cen-

sorious. They *will* talk. They are coupling our names together already.'

'Does that annoy you?' Her air was candour itself. 'Do you mind—very much?'

'Well, perhaps not very, very much. It can do *me* no harm.'

'I am glad of that.'

'But it may you, and it ought to be stopped.'

'Of course; but how?'

'There is only one way that I can see. Let us have only one name between us. I cannot very well take yours. Will you take mine?'

'Why—why—' A light seemed to break in on her all at once. 'O, what a funny man you are! That's just the same as an offer of marriage. You can't mean that, surely? It would be too—quite too—absurd.'

'I don't see the absurdity,' said his lordship rather gruffly. Were well-meant overtures ever so shamefully scorned?

'O, but I do!' Keziah's little foot was playing with the fringe of the hearthrug. 'I do. That is, if you are in earnest, which of course you're not.'

'But I am in earnest. Why should you think I'm not?'

'You don't know me; you can't care for me. You never spoke to me till yesterday. You are only making fun, and it isn't fair. I wish you'd leave me alone.'

Her eyes were full already.

'I am to go away, then?' That is your answer?' She hid her face in her hands, and would not speak. 'You will be sorry for this, perhaps, some day.' She shook her head most vigorously. 'Keziah Legh, you are the only woman I ever asked to be my wife. I shall never ask another. Good-bye, and God bless you!'

And Lord Featherstone, with a strange feeling of dejection and disappointment, left the room. He could not have believed that within this short space of time he could have been so irresistibly drawn towards any girl. Now he was grieving over his failure as though he were still in his teens.

Presently aunt Parker came in, and found Keziah sobbing fit to break her heart.

'I don't want him! I don't want him! He can go away if he likes—to the other end of the world.'

'Have you been very ill-used, my sweet? What did he say to you?'

'He asked me to marry him,' she said, with difficulty, between her sobs.

'Was that such a terrible insult, then?'

'He was only making fun. I don't like such fun. And I don't want to see him again, never, never, not as long as I live!'

'Kiss, you are right to consult your own feelings in this. But Lord Featherstone was in earnest, I think, and his intentions do him infinite credit.'

Then she told her niece what had passed.

'Still, if you don't care for him, it is best as it is. Dry your tears, Kiss, and think no more about it.'

'But I think I do care for him,' she said, and began to cry again.

Lady Carstairs became very much exercised in spirit as the days passed, and yet nothing positive was known of Lord Featherstone's intentions towards Miss Keziah Legh. Old Primrose had not kept his own counsel, and rumours reached her therefore from without of the engagement. Yet no engagement was announced. She could not understand it at all. Then in the midst of her perplexity came Tommy Cutler with a startling piece of news.

'Have you heard Featherstone's

last?' he asked, when he brought her his budget one afternoon.

'No; pray tell me!'

'He's off to Central Africa. Means to run Cameron hard for his laurels. Going to walk from Tunis or Tripoli to the Cape of Good Hope.'

'Impossible! He's going to be married. At least, so every one says. He could never take a young wife on such a journey, and men only leave old ones unprotected at home.'

'I have been telling everybody he was going to marry Kiss Legh,' said Tommy, with an injured air, as though people were personally responsible to him for carrying out his gossip to the letter.

'I cannot understand it. I must know the rights of it. He is one of my oldest friends, and I cannot help taking an interest in him.'

She made many futile efforts to meet him, then she called and sounded the ladies in Kensington-square with whom she was moderately intimate. They put back her cross-examination mildly but effectually. But at last she met Featherstone face to face and attacked him at once. 'Your high-flown sense of honour did not bear practical test, then?'

'How so, Lady Carstairs?' His coolness was provoking.

'Why rush off to Central Africa, except to escape scandal?'

'Am I going to Central Africa? Perhaps I am. Why not?'

'Can it be possible that she refused you?'

'Who could refuse me, Lady Carstairs?'

'No; but do tell me, I am dying to know.'

'You must find some one else to save your life, then.'

'But, Lord Featherstone, we shall see you once more before you start? You will come and dine with us? Just to say good-bye.'

'I will dine with you with pleasure, but not necessarily to say good-bye.'

He could not well escape from an invitation so cordially expressed, and the night was fixed. But he little thought what malice lurked beneath.

The party was a large one, and he, as was often the case, very late. When he arrived, 'a bad last,' the other guests wore that despairing look of martyrdom which waits on extreme hunger and the exhaustion of every topic of talk. But he entered gaily, as if he had come a little too soon, shook hands with the hostess, bowed here and there, nodded to one friend and smiled at another, then, last of all and to his intense surprise, his eyes rested upon Kiss Legh.

Lady Carstairs had done it on purpose, of course; that was self-evident. Unkind, unfeeling, ungenerous woman! For himself he did not care, but it was cruel upon the timid birdling, so new and strange to the world. But fast as this conviction came upon him, yet faster came the resolve that Lady Carstairs should make nothing by the move. A thoroughly well-bred man is never taken aback, and Featherstone rose to the occasion. Without a moment's delay, before the faintest flush was hung out like a signal of distress upon Keziah's cheek, he had gone up to her, shaken hands, and spoken a few simple commonplaces which meant nothing, and yet set her quite at her ease.

'Miss Legh and I are very old friends,' he said. 'How do you do, Miss Parker? How is the coachman? Have you heard, Sir John, the Prince is expected next week? There will be great doings.' And so on.

That little Kiss was grateful to him for his self-possession, was

evident from the satisfaction which beamed in her eyes. O those telltale eyes!

Now Lady Carstairs brought up her reserves and fired another broadside.

'It is so good of you, Lord Featherstone, to come to us; and you have so few nights left.'

'When do you go, Featherstone? and where?'

'Haven't you heard? To Central Africa,' Lady Carstairs answered for him.

Can this be true? Keziah's eyes asked him in mute but eloquent language, which sent a thrill through his heart.

'Where this story originated I cannot make out,' said Featherstone slowly. 'I am not going to Central Africa. On the contrary, I have the very strongest reasons for staying at home.'

'And those reasons?'

'Are best known to Miss Legh and myself.'

UNSATISFIED.

WHENCE springs the sadness youthful?
Is it a feeling ruthful
For deeds and words untruthful
In past times done and said?
What breeds the aching sorrow
Which vainly strives to borrow
The day's joy from the morrow,
No sooner come than sped?

For youth knows scant reflection,
Nor bitter introspection,
Or weary recollection
Of all that Time has wrought;
And views with brief repining
Past hopes and joys declining,
While shadows dim the shining
Of suns it sometime sought.

But since, with heart aspiring,
Youth, love and fame desiring,
Is borne on wings untiring
Of hope through unknown spheres,
Seeing that gods are stronger,
And life may last no longer
When they, who lightly wrong her,
Foreclose her fleeting years;

So, of past hopes forgetful,
For lost loves unregretful,
Youth still, in accents fretful,
Laments that naught is known,
And life is vainly given,
Since each, in darkness driven
To Hades or to Heaven,
Must bear his grief alone.

THE SURFACE OF FASHION.

A Sketch in Hyde Park.

STEEP'D in summer's golden languor,
Surface pleasure on each face,
Proud patrician, idle lounger,
Every shady corner grace.

Cautious angling, hearts entangling;
Idle wand'ring here and there;
Greeting, meeting, glances fleeting,
Smiles and laughter everywhere.

Not a frown on *piquante* faces;
Not a cloud on sunny brows;
Not a shadow, save what chases
Shafts of sunlight through the boughs.

Frills and flounces, dainty laces—
Fashion crowning Beauty's might;
Follet smiling, *mode* beguiling,
Social armour furbish'd bright.

Idle jests and rippling laughter
Trilling on the summer air;
Sudden glances, subtle chances—
Love coquetting with despair.

So through light and shadow ranging,
Airy forms flit slowly by;
Life to them a dream unchanging,
Under summer's perfect sky.

Happy dreams and happy dreamers!
Let the season come and go,
Heedless of the storms of passion,
Thunder-charged with deeper woe.

Think the clouds are fringed for ever
With the light on which you gaze;
Hearts and faces shadow'd never
By the pain of darker days.

RITA.

THE SURFACE OF FASHION: A SKETCH IN HYDE PARK.

See the Poem.

TEN DAYS IN BRITTANY.

Our visit to the good old granite cities in the fertile west of France was but a flying one. We are people who always make flying visits to beautiful or interesting scenes, and intend religiously to return and do the thing better another time. We never wear out our welcome at our inn, or satiate ourselves with the architecture of a town. We depart, leaving a wide margin of exploration for the future. 'Here to-day and gone to-morrow' is our motto.

Thus, finding ourselves at the end of July with a fortnight's holiday at our disposal, a fortnight which might possibly be stretched into three weeks, we determined upon realising the long-cherished desire of our hearts and seeing Brittany. Brittany! There is romance in the very name. All the rest of France is but leather and prunello as compared with Brittany. A region of poetry, of idyllic simplicity, of wild sea life, of all which the heart of man hankers after. All the French novels of provincial life we have ever read surge up in our memories, and they all seem to have been about Brittany. A wild people doubtless, and in some measure fearful to encounter. We think it rather a bold thing to penetrate so rugged a region. We have even an idea that there is something adventurous and heroic in the trip, like a pilgrimage to Mecca, or a journey into the mysteries of unexplored Africa. But that smack of peril makes the thing delightful.

We consult a travelled friend, who asks us for a map, and cheerfully jots down with a pencil the towns we are to visit.

'You will go to St. Malo, and up the Rance to Dinan, and from Dinan to Rennes—be sure you see Vitré, it will only take up an hour or so—from Rennes to Vannes, Auray, Quimper, Brest, Morlaix, Lannion, St. Brieuc, Portrieux, and back to Dinan.'

He runs his pencil along the map, the places look very near together, and on a fine atlas like this of Black's one ought to get a fair notion of distance. We have an idea that these halting-places are divided by about half an hour's or an hour's railway travelling. And the railway is to carry us everywhere, except here and there where there is a hiatus to be filled by diligence. Convenient, but rather at variance with that idea of Brittany which we have developed out of our inner consciousness—the Brittany of Jean Cattereau and George Cadoudal; the land of the Chouants with their screech-owl watch-cry, whence rose their name—a corruption of 'chat-huant.'

Our friend gives us his itinerary, and we make ready for departure. We hold no consultation with the gentle Cook; we are neither 'personally conducted' nor provided with tickets for a beaten round. We go forth as genuine explorers, without even so much as Hachette's convenient *Diamond Guide-book* or the ever-useful Murray. The penny time-table of the South-Western Railway—what a mass of literature for a penny!—is our only manual.

We are dwellers in a South-

Western district, and turn eagerly to the tourists' arrangements to see what our friendly South-Western can do for us. Its offers are large, its temptations strong. It can take us to the Land's End or the Cornish moors, to rocky Ilfracombe or placid Dawlish, to Weymouth—sacred to the Third George's gentle memory — to Southsea and the Wight, to Jersey, Guernsey, St. Malo, Havre, and Honfleur. Nay, it will put us under convoy of an interpreter, and have us personally conducted to Paris free of all care or trouble.

Havre, with its aristocratic neighbours, Trouville and Deauville, we know of old, and a very charming spot is the suburb of Ingouville for a summer holiday; and much is there to interest the traveller within easy distance of the busy port, with its long quays and mighty fortifications. Frascati's, too, is a pleasant hotel for those who love to live gaily among their fellow-creatures, and to sip their after-dinner coffee within sight of the sea.

We have friends whom we have promised to visit in Jersey, and this seems a good opportunity for keeping the promise; so we begin our fortnight in Brittany by spending three days in Jersey, and, unfolding our plans to the kindly captain of the steamer, he enlarges our itinerary by adding Granville, Avranches, Mont St. Michel, and Dol to the list of halting-places.

From Jersey the South-Western Company's steamer will take us across to Granville in a couple of hours or so, and we shall thus get a peep at a pretty corner of Normandy, which is new to us.

Jersey, under the broiling July sun, is almost too dazzling—every one tells us we have come a month too late or a month too soon; but who cares? We English people get so scant an allowance of sunshine in a general way, that we cannot have too much of this glorious heat and glow when Heaven blesses us with a fine old-fashioned summer; and there lies the sea all round our romantic island, with its gem-like greens and purples and translucent blues, giving rest and coolness to the eyes that look upon it.

St. Helier's is not a pretty town. I hardly think its warmest admirer would claim for it the grace of absolute beauty; but it is a town of long and wide streets, excellent shops, very fair hotels, a fine market, and most charming suburbs. In order properly to appreciate St. Helier's you must live a little way outside it, on the slope of one of those noble hills which encircle it on the landward side like a natural amphitheatre. Contemplated from this sunny and airy altitude St. Helier's is delightful; but in spite of the comfort of its hotels, the excellence of its baths, and the super-excellence of its lobsters, St. Helier's is not a town we would care to see too much of.

Surely there never was such a place for lobsters. The finest, the reddest, the noblest of their species. They appear on the breakfast-table; we meet them everywhere at our halting-places for luncheon; they ornament the dinner-table; they tempt us to the unaccustomed indulgence of supper. Let all lobster lovers emigrate to Jersey, and spoil their digestions and be happy.

The island is full of beauty. The long hilly lanes, with their wealth of verdure and overarching trees, remind one of the prettiest bits of Devonshire. The coast scenery is bolder, grander, and more varied than that of the Isle of Wight. Flowers of all kinds grow in perfection. The scarlet bells of the fuchsia light up every

cottage garden, and the hydrangea, called here the blue palm, grows with wondrous luxuriance, and assumes a lovelier hue than I have ever seen it take in any other climate. And then the fig-trees! They are as big as beeches, and here a man may verily sit under his own fig-tree, and have ample shelter from sun or rain beneath the thick spreading leaves.

I don't know why it should have entered into the mind of man that a commoner class of excursionists go to Jersey for their pleasure than to any other place, save Margate and Ramsgate. It is only fair to say that we saw no vulgarity, no herd of buff-slippered pleasure-seekers, no negro minstrels, and no invitations to tea and shrimps. There are public vehicles of the wagonette species with four horses, which drive about the island every day, taking excursionists to see the lions of the coast, and affording the traveller a long day amidst the loveliest scenery, for the small charge of half-a-crown. It is considered in the island a vulgar act to join one of these parties, because on the homeward journey the more exuberant of the excursionists are apt to be carried away by their delight in the beautiful and to break forth into singing, and of course this, from the 'papa, potatoes, prunes, and prism' point of view, is altogether abominable. We were duly warned of the danger we should have run had we, in an unwary moment, cast in our lot with these promiscuous travellers; and our friends informed us that they had engaged a landau and unicorn team to convey us to the choicest spots of the island in dignified seclusion. Our party was sprightly and well assimilated, and I fear on many occasions we were almost as noisy as the half-crown excursionists.

Six weeks in Jersey would not be a day too much. It is the place of places for the literary worker, the poet, or the painter. The distractions of the outer world would hardly touch him here, yet the island is too well populated for a feeling of dulness to arise. There is a sense of isolation, no doubt, at odd times, in the winter season, when the mails cannot come in and an accident has disabled the telegraphic system.

House-rent is said to be wonderfully low, and the island is full of pretty houses—country seats on a small scale, surrounded by delightful gardens and orchards, and hidden away in those lovely lanes. We are always driving up or down hill, and the blue warm sea smiles at us wherever we turn.

Three days are but too little, yet we contrive by the aid of the best of coachmen to see a great deal in the time; and every way seems lovelier than the last. Hard to choose where all are so fair, yet I think if I had a summer to spend in Jersey I would fix my place of abode at Goree, under the shadow of that fine old castle of Mont Orgueil, with its traditions of Charles II. and its view of the fair Norman coast, with the purple towers of Coutances cathedral on the horizon.

So after a flying visit to Jersey we embark one sunny Saturday morning on board the steamer for Granville, at that lovely hour when the air is clearest and freshest and sweetest, and which sluggards enjoy so thoroughly when they do find themselves awake so early, from the rarity of the sensation.

All Jersey is alive on this Saturday morning at seven o'clock; the markets are in full swing; the boat is crowded, but not to discomfort, with travellers, for the most part French, who certainly do take their pleasure more gaily than we do; for the wind being fresh, and

the boat rocking considerably, these lively voyagers speedily experience the approach of sea-sickness. 'Mais c'est une balançoire!' they exclaim, vainly endeavouring to keep their sea-legs; and this idea of a *balançoire* affords them a subject for all manner of small jokes, until, faint and pale, they succumb at last to Neptune's rough handling, and subside into corners, or descend to regions below.

On the bridge it is lovely—the brisk summer wind, the warm sunlight, and Jersey's rocky bays melting into distance. Very soon the Norman coast stands clearly out before us—the bold heights of Granville, and the lion of the Norman coast, Mont St. Michel. In less than three hours we are landing on the long stone pier, and our luggage is being collected in carts to be taken to the custom-house, while we make ourselves as comfortable as we can in the interior of a very small omnibus, which bristles with walking-sticks and umbrellas, and is more or less blocked by travelling-bags and portable portmanteaus.

The omnibus jolts and jogs along the stones for five minutes or so and then draws up before the custom-house, and as there are no signs of the carts with the luggage we alight and look about us. And here we get our first experience of Gallic indifference to the passage of time. That the clocks are all five-and-twenty minutes behind our own timekeepers is a fact which we accept as a national peculiarity, and regulate our watches accordingly. Latitude or longitude may have something to do with it; but if so, the railway officials despise latitude and longitude, for they all religiously adhere to Paris time, which is twenty minutes in advance of the Norman clocks, a fact which cannot be grasped too soon by the British traveller. It is not this which astonishes us, however, in our neighbours across Channel, but that placid unconcern about loss of time; that amiable readiness to waste twenty minutes upon a task that could easily be performed in five; that good-humoured dilatoriness, as of a people who have never known what it is to be in a hurry. The eager Briton, with his motto of 'Time is money,' seems a most ferocious being, as he drives and hustles—or endeavours to drive and hustle—these easy-going officials. There is no taking time by the forelock here; one must just consent to move in a leisurely way.

So we wait half an hour for the carts which were loaded before we left the pier, and but for the courteousness of the custom-house officer might lose another half-hour while our portmanteau was awaiting examination; but he gives a friendly nod, says 'Marquez,' and our faithful black friend—the battered and shabby companion of many journeys—gets a chalk mark, and is incontinently pounced upon by a feminine porter in rusty black, who hoists it on to the roof of the omnibus as if it were a feather; and off we jog to the Hôtel de Trois Couronnes, where we get an excellent *table d'hôte* breakfast and find a most obliging hostess, who, on learning that we are anxious to push on to Avranches that afternoon, undertakes to get us a carriage and a pair of decent horses on reasonable terms.

We have just an hour to see Granville and its cathedral, nobly placed on a height above the straggling old town and harbour. Resisting the pressing invitations of various drivers of ancient wagonettes in the last stage of decomposition, who are desirous of driving us off to the neighbouring watering-place of St. Pair, which seems to be the Pegwell Bay of this Norman

Ramsgate, we mount a steep and narrow street which takes us into a still steeper one at right angles with it, and by this sharp ascent climb up to a picturesque little bit of ground on the ramparts, where there are stalls gaily set out, and a few trees, and a general brightness in the aspect of things which reminds us we are not in Ramsgate. The walls are old, the houses are old, the shops are old, the paving-stones are very knobby and difficult to walk upon, the odours that prevail are not of roses and lavender; but there is the bright blue sea shining below us, and there are yellow sands and bathing-machines and happy people; and one feels altogether that paterfamilias —sick to the heart of English watering-places — might do worse than bring his wife and children to Granville, and let them sit upon those sands, or roam about the fair Norman country which surrounds the town on every side.

We pass under a dark old arch, where the portcullis once guarded the way, and up another hill to the cathedral, which has no great pretensions to architectural beauty, and has a look of poverty. Its situation is the best thing about it. Then back by the hilly street, and on to the ramparts, and down to the lower part of the town by a flight of stone steps. Here comes a regiment of boyish-looking recruits, with cheerful faces, and towels under their arms, fresh from a sea-bath.

Our kind landlady at the Trois Couronnes has engaged a superannuated barouche with a pair of sturdy Norman horses—and, O, what work these Norman steeds can do!—and a driver in a blue blouse, which looks clean and comfortable this blazing July weather. And here I must say a word in praise of this cleanly blue linen which the commonalty wear all through Normandy and Brittany, and which might assuredly be adopted by our own working classes for summer wear with economy and comfort. It is a costume at once easy to make, easy to wash, and cheap to buy.

That drive from Granville to Avranches on a summer afternoon is something to remember. The country is beautiful, rich and fertile as Devonshire, with glimpses of the sea through the trees; a pastoral country, with orchards and cornfields in the foreground, and wooded hills in the distance. The road is magnificent —a straight line from Granville to the base of the hill on which Avranches is built. It is wonderful to look along that straight white line, dwindling to a vanishing point, till the end looks like an obelisk at the top of the hill.

Our coachman seemed inexpressibly proud of this straight road, and told us how when we got to that summit, where the imaginary obelisk gleamed whitely against the horizon, we should see Avranches and the end of our journey before us.

The hills were tremendous, but those sturdy Norman horses made nothing of them. We passed the finest avenue of poplars I ever saw in my life. I had no idea that much abused and useful tree could be so beautiful. These poplars were planted wide apart along both sides of the white road, and seemed to pierce the sky; noble trees, bushy from base to point, leafy towers of darkest green.

Half-way, at the top of a hill, we stop at Sartilly, a small town or village, consisting of a long wide street, a church lately rebuilt, some curious old houses soon to be pulled down, and a good many inns or *cafés*, each with a withered bush hanging before the door. This old sign of the bush prevails every-

where. It is inexpensive and sufficient. Almost every other house in a village seems to hang out its bush. The license question is evidently treated in a very liberal spirit.

Here we rest the horses and refresh ourselves and our coachman in a neat little Café des Voyageurs, where everything is clean and bright, and where our Jehu makes himself very much at home, going to cupboards and fishing out all he wants, as freely as if our good-humoured-looking hostess was his mother. We ask him to take something at our expense, but he is by no means encroaching. He and a companion Jehu, who has brought another party up the long hill from Granville, drink cider out of large breakfast-cups, and invite us all to *trinquer;* so behold us in our little half-way house clinking cups with the two blue-bloused coachmen. And throughout our travels westward we find ourselves hobnobbing with our charioteers in the same friendly fashion.

We walk on to look at the church, which is spacious and clean, but newly built and uninteresting; and we peep in at the living-rooms of Sartilly, in which we see the substantial cherry-wood wardrobe or bureau, with its brass fittings, which is the chief feature in every decent dwelling; also the curious square bedstead, almost as stuffy and darksome as the Scottish enclosed bed, piled up with bedding, and ornamented with those immense square pillows which must make a recumbent position almost impossible. How people ever get into these beds, or, being in, how they get out of them, is one of the insoluble mysteries of French village life; but there is a certain grandeur in the appearance of these clumsy old square bedsteads, which no doubt atones for their inconvenience.

We stop to admire the old-fashioned penthouse chimney, furnished with narrow shelves for the exhibition of brazen pipkins and vessels of all kinds, a chimney-piece out of a Dutch picture. But the proprietress of this delightful chimney tells us with satisfaction that *tout ça* is going to be removed and the place modernised.

Now we descend a long hill, and see Avranches before us, gleaming whitely against the distant horizon.

'A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.' Those words were in my mind as we approached Avranches, which is chiefly famous for its superb position, and cannot be too much admired on that account. Even Edinburgh is not so nobly placed as Avranches. As we see it from the bottom of the hill, with its winding terraced approach, it seems to us the most beautiful town we have ever beheld, and we do not wonder that it should be a favourite residence for English people.

The town is in itself nowise remarkable. There are some pretty houses in gardens on the outskirts, and an incipient boulevard or two. The principal street is long and narrow, the principal church in course of reconstruction, and promising to be very fine when finished. It stands on a hill, and near it is the Jardin des Plantes, from which we see one of the finest views in France—the winding river widening to the sea, a vast champagne country stretching away into blue distance, and yonder, on the sandy edge of the sea, the mighty peak of Mont St. Michel, crowned with its marvellous towers.

To Mont St. Michel we are bound, after a night's rest, an excellent breakfast at the Hôtel de Londres—a clean and comfortable hostelry, with a most agreeable hostess, and a friendly chamber-

maid, who brings us a great metal can of ice-cold well-water for our toilet. We have agreed with an eager young porter, who is evidently in the pay of the livery-stable whose Américaines he so strongly recommends, for the hire of a good carriage and horse to take us to the Mount and back; and having given him his own price for the vehicle it is rather disappointing to behold the dilapidated machine and the ungainly-looking steed he has provided. That the harness should be eked out with whipcord is nothing—we are getting accustomed to that—but it strikes paterfamilias that there is rather more whipcord than usual, and this fact, taken in conjunction with the exhausted condition of the vehicle, is dispiriting.

Off we go, however, and our steed shows a latent liveliness of disposition by shying at various objects he passes. It is Sunday afternoon, and the chief street of Avranches is very quiet; a Scotch town could hardly look more Sabbatarian. We descend the hill by a corkscrew-terraced road, like that by which we ascended on the other side of Avranches, and the way in which our Norman driver rattles down this corkscrew road is somewhat alarming. We see the road winding below us in circles, amidst orchards and meadows, all neat and ornamental as a parterre in a garden.

Now comes a long straight high-road, broad, smooth, superbly kept; for the French Government takes much more care of its high-roads than we do of ours, and there are stringent rules as to the width of wagon-wheels and the taking on of extra horses at difficult points, so that we encounter none of those dangerous ruts which are more common now than of old on our English coach-roads.

We cross the river Selune, which is doubtless a very fine river when it has any water in it, but which just at present resembles the port of Barnstable at low tide, and exhibits a noble expanse of mud, with a narrow channel in the middle.

We pass through the village of Pontabauld, and by many farms and orchards—orchards where the big old spreading apple-trees are growing among the ripe yellow corn—and chestnut-groves; and homesteads, where purple plums are ripening on the old plastered walls; and whitewashed cabins, which remind one of Southern Ireland; and cider *cafés* innumerable, where the withered mistletoe hangs over the open door; and a good many families of pigs and poultry, and magpies in every field; and at one village some little girls in white robes of innocence, fresh from their first communion; and so on to the sandy difficult lanes which lead to the Grève, or vast stretch of treacherous sands that lie between Mont St. Michel and the mainland.

We halt at the last village, 'pour laisser le cheval souffler un peu'—which we find is a periphrasis for the coachman drinking a bowl of cider—and it is to be observed that to *souffler un peu* is the sole refreshment that unfortunate animal gets throughout the journey. Not a mouthful of hay, not a drop of water to wash out his parched mouth, despite our suggestions on the subject; 'Il sera très-bien à Mont St. Michel,' we are told, and with this assurance we are obliged to be satisfied.

That little village inn is a type of all the village inns we see in our travels. A large low square room, floored with earth, with heavy beams supporting the ceiling. The national bed in a corner; a wide open hearth, on which a handful of embers are smouldering under

a funny little iron coffee-pot; a large table, at which a dozen blue-bloused rustics are drinking hard cider out of exaggerated breakfast-cups; an open press against the wall, containing numerous shelves neatly set out with bottles and crockery.

Our hostess is very anxious that we should quench our thirst from a bottle of syrup labelled *Gomme Arabique*, which she recommends as wonderfully *rafraichissant;* but to our ignorance a solution of gum Arabic seems hardly the best draught for a blazing summer day, and we prefer the sour cider of the country, which we drink without a wry face, not forgetting to *trinquer* with the coachman; and the horse having by this time blown himself into a state of placid melancholy—perhaps conscious of those sandy lanes that lie before him—we remount the rotten old Victoria—it must have been built ages before her gracious Majesty's accession—and turn into a road which Dante might have described had he been minded to picture an equine purgatory.

It is a soft sandy lane, in which the wheels sink deep. We offer to get out and walk, but our coachman tells us cheerfully that it is not worth while, it is not far, and so on, till we come to the sandy shore and the track which leads across to the Mount; and there it is before us, this wondrous monument of the superb Middle Ages—ramparts and citadel, hospital and church, wall above wall, and buttress above buttress, with pinnacles that climb to the skies, ambitious as a Christian Babel.

Seen in the distance it has seemed to us in no way superior to its twin brother on our western shore, Mount St. Michael. Seen close it appears infinitely grander than our Cornish castle-crowned rock, but not so lovely. The fortress of the St. Aubyns fades into insignificance beside this pile of Gothic masonry; but the craggy slopes of our Cornish Mount, the peaceful fishing-village at its base, the blue and emerald sea that kisses its granite feet instead of these barren sands, make altogether a fairer picture than this dark rock, with its gloomy ramparts and frowning gateways. We drive in under the archway, and alight at our hostelry of the Golden Head, where mine host, a lively young man, with a pleasant smile, takes our cloaks and umbrellas into his keeping, and leaves us to the conduct of the guide, a vivacious Norman, who looks rather like an animated scarecrow, and who has come half-way across the Grève to take possession of us.

We mount to the ramparts by a steep granite stair, and climb higher and higher; looking down on our left into the gardens of the little town, where great fig-trees spread their leafy branches and overshadow the angular patches of turf or pottage-garden. On the highest point of the ramparts we come suddenly upon a wide-open window, by which an old woman in a snowy muslin cap lies on a couch looking out at sea and sky. There is a money-box beside the window, with an inscription entreating our charity for a poor paralytic who has lost the use of her limbs. This is her life, poor soul, to lie and watch the changes of sea and sky, and see the cheerful tourists go tramping by at the heels of the bare-footed guide, saying the same things and making the same exclamations, from spring to autumn; and then comes the dreary winter, and fierce winds blow, and angry seas roll over the white reach of sand, and the windows must be shut, and there are no more *sous* for the poor paralytic.

Our guide leaves us at the gate of the fortress, and we purchase tickets of admission to the castle and cathedral of St. Michel, as if for a concert or a play—a great improvement, by the way, upon the 'whatever you please to give' system, which never pleases anybody; and then a friendly young monk takes us under his wing, and we follow him from the gloomy grandeur of the crypt to the delicate and airy cloisters, from the Salle des Chevaliers to the beautiful church, and finally mount the tower, to look out over the fertile Norman landscape, and the wide long sandy shore, with the rock called La Tombelaine, popularly supposed to mean 'La tombe d'Hélène,' and that narrow muddy stream the Côesnon, which divides Normandy from Brittany.

It would need a volume to describe the Gothic pile. Does not Pliny take a volume to describe his country house? and this ancient house of the Knights Templars is infinitely more interesting than a villa in the suburbs of Rome. We leave the kind little monk on the threshold of his wondrous dwelling-place, whose various features he has expounded with an amiable patience, and we descend a flight of stone steps to the little town, which consists of one steep street, where the inhabitants are sitting at their doors in the Sunday evening rest; one group of old women playing cards with a priest, and the whole party too deeply absorbed in the game to look up as we go by.

At the Golden Head our host promises us an excellent dinner if we will but wait twenty minutes. We have the Grève, and the sandy lanes beyond, and the long, long road to Avranches in our mind, and suggest a cutlet or a *filet de bœuf*, or anything that could be cooked quickly; but our host says 'No; give him twenty minutes;' so we consent to be taken into the *salle-à-manger*, a long room opening out of the kitchen, where the table is neatly laid for a party of eighteen or twenty, and there we wait mine host's twenty minutes; which lengthen into forty, and see the broad yellow light grow dim, and the little children of Mont St. Michel disporting themselves in the street before our window, and the gossips foregathering, and the domestic business of the Golden Head being carried forward in an open shop opposite, which seems a curious substitute for a back kitchen.

At last our landlady appears with the soup. She is the prettiest woman we have seen in Normandy—a brunette, with lovely eyes, and a sweet expression, full of intelligence and amiability. She brings us the soup, which we soon come to recognise as an inevitable preliminary to every dinner—the mildest broth imaginable, full of sopped bread; a far more wholesome pottage doubtless than Bisque, or Crécy, or Palestine, either of which would be more acceptable to our unregenerate natures. After the *bouillon* we have the *bouilli*, which is in appearance slightly suggestive of cat's-meat, but which, eaten with the greenest and sourest of gherkins, is not so bad as it looks. The next course is a dish of red mullet stewed in butter, which Apicius or Lucullus might approve. Then comes a *gigot* from the *prés salés*, and then roast fowl and salad, Roquefort or Gruyère cheese, and fruit *à discrétion*, a dinner which can hardly be considered dear at two shillings and a penny. When we begin we have the long table all to ourselves, a melancholy row of empty covers; but before we have finished half a dozen other guests have dropped in, notably a stout gentleman with a young

wife, whom we have reason to remember, as we meet them everywhere. They haunt us, or we haunt them, throughout our holiday, and it gets to be quite a laughing matter when we meet.

Evening is closing in upon us when we drive away from the Golden Head, after promising the pretty landlady to come and spend a week with her in the leisurely days of the future; and indeed there is plenty of amusement and occupation for the artist in colours or pen and ink at the Norman Mount, and one might spend a week there with delight.

It is eight o'clock, and we are a long way from Avranches. We rattle under the old archway, and cross the Grève at a crawl—an alarming crawl when we consider the distance we have to traverse. We have not reached the sandy lanes before we begin to doubt and tremble a little as to the probability of our seeing Avranches on this side of midnight. We propose getting out and walking through the lanes; but our charioteer has infinite faith in that unhappy beast of his, and insists on our keeping our places, which, as we are all tired, we do. Very slow is our progress through those rustic lanes, where the old Norman homesteads and stone wells, with their dome-shaped covers, look very picturesque in the dim light. The glowworms have lit their vivid lamps in all the hedges. Here and there we get a glimpse of a cottage interior; but the houses are for the most part dark, and this lack of light is a fact which we notice throughout our travels. Those twinkling lighted windows, which gleam so cheerily in an English village, are here unseen. It would seem as if a stricter economy were practised, and that the French peasant goes to bed with the sun, or enjoys his supper and evening gossip in the semi-darkness of a summer evening. What a relief it is, after an hour's laborious progress, and after our driver has descended from his perch about a dozen times to do something to that wretched harness, when we emerge upon the hard high-road, and stop at the same old *café* we were at in the morning, for the horse to blow and the driver to refresh himself with another draught of cider! We resume our journey at quite a lively trot, with the usual accompaniment of 'Hé donc, allez donc!' repeated like a tune. But not for long. The harness is all wrong again, and our friend alights to patch it up. Again a cheerful trot. We admire the glowworms, and the fair sweep of hill-side and cornfield and orchard, and begin to think that after all we shall get to Avranches on the right side of midnight, when something goes crack, and our driver jumps off his perch as if it were the most natural thing in the world for a trace to break every other mile or so.

'Ce n'est rien,' he assures us when we inquire mildly as to the extent of the damage; and on he rattles again with his 'Hé donc, allez donc!' till our hearts sink within us at the prospect of being left all night on that lonely Norman road, and having to encamp in one of those peaceful cornfields. How lonely it is! We have not seen a vehicle of any kind since we left the Mount. There is not a glimmer of light in the wide landscape, except the starry glowworms in the hedges; and we are ever so many miles from Avranches. A drizzling rain is falling too, and the air is getting chilly.

It is rather a gloomy drive for the next hour, with a perpetual patching up of the harness. A farmer drives past us with a lively

white horse, and inquires kindly if he can be of any use—an offer which our coachman declines haughtily, and with an offended air.

So we jog on, till at last we come to a straggling row of houses, all dark save where here and there the interior of a *café* glimmers duskily. Here our charioteer suddenly pulls up at a corner house, and asks us to descend. The harness has broken down utterly at last.

We alight, and go into the *café*, where the last guests are finishing their cider in a Dantesque gloom. They all troop out to look at the harness, and leave us alone in the house of entertainment, with the dusky old bed in the corner, and gloomy presses looming out of the shadows, and a little heap of embers expiring on the wide hearth. A gruesome place to be in at eleven o'clock on a Sunday evening, were we not so sure of the kindness and hearty good-will of the people.

What a fuss there is about that harness! what running in and out, and fetching of lanterns and little bits of wood and ends of cord! The whole business takes a good half-hour, and we are still an hour from Avranches, with that corkscrew hill to climb at the end of our journey. At last, however, all is done. The wretched old traces and back-band have been pegged here and tied there; there is a friendly chorus of 'Pas de danger! pas de danger!' and off we go, this time at a really decent pace, for midnight is near, and perchance our patient steed scents his stables afar off on the hill-top.

Next morning we start on the banquette of the diligence for Dol—a superb morning, and all the country refreshed by a night of soft summer showers. We have to struggle for those places on the banquette, but we get them and triumph, while the interior of the vehicle is filled to suffocation, and there is a mountain of luggage on the roof behind us.

What a delicious drive that is along the noble Norman road! such a road as could be hardly matched in England—by meadows and orchards where the rosy apples ripen above the tawny wheat, and chestnut-groves innumerable. Those Spanish chestnut-trees are the glory of the land. And so to Pontorson, a quiet old town, where we stop for ten minutes or so, and where an elderly female climbs a ladder to bring us a syphon and a carafon of cognac. The diligence is admirably horsed, by the way, with strong Norman steeds, something like our brewers' dray-horses, and we change horses frequently. We cross a river just outside Pontorson, and then turn off at an angle; and lo, we are in Brittany!

This is Brittany. We gaze around with rapture. We are in a verdant lane, such as we have driven through many a time and for many a mile in Devonshire, in Kent, in Surrey. Our chief looks about him with an air of disappointment.

'I don't think it's worth while coming so far,' he says; 'it's exactly like England;' and composes himself to sleep again, in his snug corner of the banquette.

The land is divided into very small fields, of all manner of shapes; a three-cornered bit here, an oblong patch there. The reapers are at work in many of these small enclosures. In one we see a solitary old woman grappling the whole field; in another a gang of reapers standing close together in a row, as if they had laid a wager that they would cut all the corn in an hour. Strings of horses go by, with picturesque wooden collars and blue sheepskins on their shoul-

ders, drawing carts of sand to be used as manure. We see a good many groups sitting at dinner—such cheerful circles, old and young; the women wearing their quaint and various caps, all snowy white, or seeming so in the bright atmosphere.

We change horses at a village, where there are two or three comfortable-looking houses in walled gardens, where one might doze away a peaceful buried-alive kind of life, and need spend but little money—a cluster of curious old houses which have seen better days—the inevitable *café cidre* with its pendent bush, an ancient church, and a post-office, where we call for the letter-bag.

More Devonshire lanes, and reapers and cowboys, and chestnut-groves, and white horses with blue sheepskin housings; and by and by we see the church towers of Dol-de-Bretagne, commanding a landscape of exceeding flatness. We alight at the railway station, leave our luggage, and walk into the quiet old town, one of the frontier towns of Brittany.

It is quiet exceedingly; about on a par with Sandwich, in the Isle of Thanet, as to traffic. There is a fine wide street, with one of those curious old colonnades which soon become familiar to us as the distinctive feature of these old Breton towns; a broad pillared way, above which the first story of the houses projects. Very fine are the twisted columns and curious carvings in front of the shabby old shops. About two-thirds of the shops in every town appear to be bakers' and cider shops. We see the big brown cakes at every turn. In the side streets here the houses are very old, and massively built of dark-gray granite, with great granite benches or counters in front of the ground-floor windows, on which some of the shopkeepers exhibit their wares. Everything in Dol looks very dingy and dilapidated, as if the march of improvement had left this quiet corner behind. The military element is less noticeable here than in Avranches, where we heard the little drum beat to bed, and the fifes sounding shrilly in the morning, and much marching and countermarching all day long.

The church is fine, and has been carefully restored, but one tower remains unfinished as it was left in the beginning of days, and looks as if it had been struck by lightning. After examining the church and its numerous chapels, in which the richly sculptured altars are for the most part modern, we leave by a door that takes us out into an open place, and thence find our way to the Hôtel Notre Dame, an old house in an old street, very humble as to its exterior appearance, but a good old mansion within, with a kitchen like a Dutch picture: low rooms heavily timbered; an old oak staircase, up which one could drive a coach and pair; and clean-looking old bedchambers, with massive doors fastened with big iron latches.

Here we sit down at the *table d'hôte*, and make the usual progress from *bouillon* to *bouilli*, in the midst of which second course our stout friend and his young wife, whom we left last night at Mont St. Michel, made their entrance. They have had a 'good time' at the Mount, and report favourably of those *belles chambres* which Madame Poulard, our pretty hostess, so cordially recommended to us.

After dinner we drive through a flat Dutch-looking landscape along a road beside a canal, to the Mont Dol, a great lonely granite rock rising from the plain. There is a church at the base of the hill, and a little village straggling up the slope; and above church and village

we climb to a wild heathy hill-top overlooking land and sea, and surmounted by a little chapel and a big statue of our Lady of Hope. It is a most lovely spot, and I should like to spend a week at dull old Dol in just such summer weather as this, for the sake of rambling about this common. The only human creature we meet in our ramble is an innocent-faced boy, who asks us if we have met a sheep up yonder, and does not ask us for 'a copper,' as a British subject would assuredly have done under the circumstances.

There is a Druidic Menhir in a field not far from Dol, which our coachman calls 'le monument,' and which he wants to show us and we ought to see; but our train starts for Rennes in an hour, and according to the law of the land we must be at the station twenty minutes before the starting of the train to book our luggage—no catching trains by an odd second or so here. So we contrive to exist without seeing the Menhir, which is a tall cone-shaped stone with a cross at the top, the emblem of Christianity having been added to the Druidic monument.

From Dol to Rennes by moonlight—a sleepy journey, in which we see but little of the landscape, and scarcely hear the names of the stations. It is nearly midnight when we reach the capital of Brittany, where the usual hotel omnibus waits to convey us to the Grand Hôtel Julien.

It is quite a long drive from the station to the hotel, and we feel that we are in a large and prosperous city. The lighted boulevard is wide and handsome, and has an almost Parisian look. At the hotel we have some difficulty in securing rooms, and our fellow-traveller of the omnibus is sent away despairing. Hard to have the key of the street in a big strange city, with midnight booming from the great cathedral clock, close at hand.

We do get very comfortable quarters, however, *au troisième*, and sleep soundly, though the great clock chimes the quarters so near our pillows that it seems almost as if we were sleeping in the cathedral tower. Never, save at the Golden Lion of Ghent, have I slept quite so near the cathedral chimes, and there the carillon was maddening. Curious too to be waited upon by a masculine chambermaid—a young man in a white apron, who attends upon the bedchambers, and does his work quietly, civilly, and well, though the idea is intensely disagreeable to the English mind. It is a capital hotel, this Grand Hôtel Julien, but somewhat expensive as compared with the hostelries of smaller cities. We get an excellent breakfast, and it must in justice be admitted that the *tables d'hôte* of Brittany give very good value for one's money, and that the healthy appetite of the English traveller does not leave a wide margin for the innkeeper's profit. Excellent and liberal are the breakfasts and dinners of the Hôtel Julien, but apartments are a little dearer than they might be.

After breakfast we sally forth and see the city of Rennes, which is a Paris in little—wide streets, airy squares, good houses, admirable shops, fine quays and markets, a noble museum and picture-gallery, numerous churches, and here and there a little bit of the old city, which was burnt down in 1720.

To-day is a great day in Rennes. A new president has been elected, and there is a grand military and civil reception at the Palais de Justice. Handsome carriages are dashing up and down the Rue de la Monnaie, and drawing up in the grand square before the Palais.

Veterans, whose broad breasts are covered with medals and crosses, pass to and fro; officers of every age and every rank, in their uniforms of state—epaulettes flashing, scabbards gleaming, spurs clanking on the pavement. We ask the reason why the flower of the French army are thus on view, and are told that it is '*une visite*;' whereat, being but scantily enlightened, we press the question further, and finally make out that somebody has been elected president of something, and that there has been an installation of some kind in the splendid Salle de Justice, for which we are just too late, followed by a reception.

We ask an officer if it is permitted to enter the building. He thinks not, *pendant la visite*. But we make bold to enter, and find a crowd ascending the broad stone staircase. We follow to a vast hall on the first story, and here we have the pleasure of seeing the French army in its glory—men who have fought in the Crimea, heroes of Algiers and Italy, martyrs of the last slaughterous campaign. They have a grave and careworn look, many of them, as of men who have fought and suffered and seen cruel reverses and undeserved humiliations—their country's blood spilt like water, their national pride abased.

The law and the church are also represented—counsellors in tall black-velvet caps, richly trimmed with silver braid; advocates with sky-blue scarves across their silk gowns. A bystander to whom we address our questions is quite surprised to learn that *our* Queen's Counsel do not wear silver-braided hats and sky-blue scarves. Imagine Serjeant Ballantyne in a sky-blue scarf, or Mr. Baron Hawkins in a tall velvet cap, silver-bedizened like a Polish nobleman in a Surrey melodrama.

The generals, the colonels, the captains, the abbés, the counsellors, the advocates pass and repass. There seems to be no end of them; and at last we depart before they have ceased their perambulations. From the Palais de Justice we drive to the Champs de Mars—a wide gravel quadrangle, with the cavalry barracks on one side, and a raised terrace-walk on another. Here there is a horse-fair, like a picture by Rosa Bonheur on an exaggerated scale; and a most amusing business this horse-fair is. The horses are of the useful rather than the ornamental class, and are chiefly designed for agricultural purposes. Thirty to thirty-five pounds seems about the figure for the best of them, and very good of their class they are. We might take away a couple of tall bays for seventy pounds, which in the hands of a skilful groom would make as good-looking a pair of carriage-horses, for heavy work, as one need care to have. We make the acquaintance of one honest-looking brute, who, we are informed, is two years old, and has been working on his native farm for the last twelve months.

There is one piteous feature in the horse-fair from which we turn with aching hearts. The superannuated cavalry horses are drawn up in a row in front of the barracks, to be sold with all their faults; and, alas, for some of these the knacker's-yard would be a haven of blessed repose. Some of them are like that horse Petruchio rode on his wedding-morning, or at any rate recall the memory of that much-afflicted steed. There they stand meekly, while their faults, misfortunes, and vices are called over to the speculative crowd. What will be their fate when the day's sale is over, and they pass into strange stables?

From the Champs de Mars we make a circuit of the city; ascend to the Jardin des Plantes, beautifully situated on rising ground; and thence, with occasional stoppages, to contemplate some picturesque relic of the past, to the museum on the quay, where we spend an hour or so very pleasantly, looking at a fine collection of pictures, and a still finer one of prints, etchings, and drawings of all kinds, by the old masters, exquisitely arranged.

The quays are all alive with various laundry establishments, in which we see the washerwomen of Brittany manipulating their clients' linen on stone benches by the river-side, slapping and banging it with their wooden beetles. How anything in the way of Manchester goods or Rouennerie, Irish linen or Flemish, ever holds together for a month against such ill-usage is a marvel. Balzac's hero should have taken the *peau de chagrin* to one of these laundry establishments, and had it beetled. The indestructible fabric which defied hydraulic pressure must have succumbed to the ferocity of one of these *belles blanchisseuses de la Bretagne.*

From Rennes we go to Vitré—three-quarters of an hour's journey by rail—the oldest city in Brittany, or rather the city which has best preserved its antiquity. It is a marvel of mediæval beauty. Pompeii itself could not be more interesting or more characteristic of a departed age. We feel as if we lived in the days of Quentin Durward as we look up at the old town-wall, in a wonderful state of preservation, with its massive bastion towers, its granite curtain from bastion to bastion, its machicolated parapets and curious conical roofs. Some of the towers have been made into private dwelling-houses. The old castle is used as a barrack, and we see the soldiers being drilled in the wide courtyard.

The town is built on a slope, the narrow streets, steep and stony, widening into open spaces at the top of the hill. There is hardly a house that looks newer than the sixteenth century, for the few that have been rebuilt have preserved much of their original character. In the better streets the houses are all built with the upper story projecting over the lower, leaving a wide covered way beneath. The pavement of this colonnade is, in most cases, raised three or four feet above the level of the road, and seems to be formed of solid blocks of granite. Before one house there is an auction going on—the selling-off of a departed cloth-merchant's stock-in-trade. The buyers, chiefly women, are sitting in a circle round the auctioneer, working busily, and making a pleasant afternoon of it. There is a good deal of fun going on; and the auctioneer evidently knows what he is about.

An old man with whom we converse tells us proudly that Vitré is the first and last town in Brittany—the first on arriving and the last on departing. But as we found our way into the romantic province by Dol, and shall leave it by St. Malo, the fact hardly comes home to us as vividly as it might.

The cathedral at Vitré is fine, and boasts an exterior pulpit richly carved in the flamboyant style. There is an old convent opposite the church, and a spacious covered market-place of modern date, where we amuse ourselves for half an hour bargaining for lace and embroidery with a good-tempered and very business-like market-woman, who will not turn away money.

There is an open square a little way beyond the church, on which

look three or four houses of a superior class, which one would ascribe at a venture to the days of the thirteenth Louis. Then there is a little green boulevard, sloping to the ramparts, and shadowed on one side by the high wall of the castle, ancient and massive and gray, with a bastion tower jutting out here and there at an angle. Well may Skinner Prout, the water-colour painter, have loved these crumbling old cities of Brittany, for they are infinitely rich in form and colour, and deeply interesting by association with past glories.

The boulevard leads us to a pretty walk along the ramparts, looking down a steep slope to the river, which seems a long way below us, and on the brink of which the usual beetling process is in active operation. The white caps and animated forms of the laundresses give life and colour to the scene. A scattered village lies down there in the valley by the winding river.

We follow the ramparts for some distance, and then get back into the town by a dark and massive archway, and descend another hilly street, with much pausing before wonderful old doorways and winding granite stairs, such as one sees here and there in the unsavouriest wynds of the Canongate. In some of these half-timbered houses the carvings are wonderfully rich—grinning faces or carven shields on every story, and the jutting ends of the great timbers carved in every imaginable device. The steeply-sloping roofs with their hooded windows are deliciously picturesque—generally a double row of windows in the dark-gray roof, the upper hood much smaller than the lower, and a large central opening for taking up the winter stock of fire-wood, which is always stored in the top of the house. We saw this storing of wood going on in many places in the blazing July weather, at a time when a handful of hot ashes on the hearth seemed all-sufficient for the needs of the household.

We discovered an excellently-furnished *table d'hôte* at the hotel near the station, and on leaving found our hostess awaiting us in the hall with a special dish of apricots, as if pleased to pay some little attention to strangers—only one small instance of that unvarying courtesy which we encountered everywhere.

It is growing dusk by this time, but we have just an hour for strolling about the wonderful old streets before the train leaves for Rennes, and very pleasant we find this hour.

It is supper-time at Vitré, and the inhabitants are sitting on their doorsteps with basins in their laps, eating the national cabbage-soup. Gossip and supper are going on everywhere; and though there is an absolute absence of anything approaching luxury or the coarse plenty of an English manufacturing town, there is no appearance of squalid poverty anywhere, and there is a general air of order and contentment. A peaceable happy people, one would say; satisfied with a little, taking care of their money, preserving old customs, unambitious, simple-minded.

We leave Vitré regretfully, especially lamenting our inability to see Les Rochers, the seat of Madame de Sevigné. The sun is setting redly behind those grand old granite walls. There are flowers blooming in the deep-set windows of the old bastion towers; where the archers sent forth their cruel rain of arrows the scarlet geranium flourishes abundantly, or the vine clings with loving tendrils to the gray stone.

From Rennes to Vannes is a longish journey, through a pretty and fertile landscape. Some part

of the country through which we go is wilder and more picturesque than the usual fields and lanes and chestnut-woods. There are rugged hills and quarries, and the landscape reminds us of the single line of rail between Shrewsbury and Llandrindod.

Vannes is a shabby old town, with a few fine buildings, and a good deal that is old and interesting, but with not much to catch the eye of the eager tourist. We jolt along a dusty boulevard in the usual omnibus to the Hôtel Vincent du Commerce, which we are assured is a most comfortable hostelry. But before we reach the hotel we have made up our minds, guided by the experience of a friendly fellow-traveller, to push on to Auray in the evening, there being nothing to be seen at Vannes to occupy us more than a couple of hours.

The two principal churches possess a certain grandeur, and are interesting architecturally, but they look poor and shabby, perhaps more especially so after that splendid heathen temple, the cathedral at Rennes, which has just been restored with marvellous richness, its interior one glow of coloured marbles and gilding. We hear some divine singing in a convent church, one contralto voice worthy to be remembered for a lifetime, and then, having 'done' the churches, endeavour to find a *voiture de place.*

Not a vehicle of any kind is to be seen in the important city of Vannes; but on inquiring of a native we are told to apply round the corner, where a large white board painted with large black letters informs us that Gouhipel lets carriages and horses of exceeding excellence.

Nor is Gouhipel the only man who can oblige us. His next-door neighbour, Glou, also lets carriages; and *his* next neighbour again, with a still more outlandish name, follows the same trade. There must be a plethora of vehicles for hire in this particular spot.

All three houses have a look of afternoon repose. There are no carriages standing about, no sign of stable or steed, no loafing ostler gossiping with his underling in an archway, no appearance of life, human or equine. We ring M. Gouhipel's bell, which summons, after some delay, is responded to by Madame Gouhipel; who, on being questioned, replies that there is a carriage, yes, assuredly, but it is out at this moment, and she will fetch it, an operation which she assures us will be performed in five minutes; whereupon she disappears at the back of the premises, and we see her no more.

Many minutes elapse, and our chief, growing impatient, insists upon ringing Glou's bell, which we feel to be a breach of faith with Madame Gouhipel. But this dishonourable act profits him nothing, as Madame Glou informs us that her carriages are all out—where, Heaven knows. Application to number three produces the same result; and so we wait another quarter of an hour or so, when Madame Gouhipel reappears, and informs us that the *voiture* will be at our service *tout de suite.* We have learned by this time what value to attach to this phrase, so we tell her that we will walk on, and the vehicle can follow us.

We do walk on, and look at the old streets and half-timbered houses for at least three-quarters of an hour, till at last we see our chariot approaching in the distance at the usual rattle. Such a carriage—a kind of superannuated tilbury, with a leather hood and a leather apron, and a little wooden perch in front for the driver. The driver wears the Breton costume, which we see for the first time in Vannes.

It is something like the dress of a Spanish muleteer, and has a very picturesque effect—a broad felt hat with a velvet band, like a sombrero, a short black jacket with many buttons. The Breton properly should wear breeches, black stockings, and shoes with large silver buckles; but those we saw were degenerate as to the lower man, and wore trousers.

We inquire our coachman's fare *à l'heure*, to which he replies three francs. We venture to remark, with all due submission, that the fare at Rennes for a far better vehicle was one franc seventy-five; to which he responds, with a Spanish dignity, that his fare is three francs, implying that we may take him or leave him.

There are no steps, and we ascend by the wheel, and seat ourselves; whereupon M. Gouhipel bolts us in with a massive bolt, which shoots into an iron socket, and secures the apron as firmly as if we were state prisoners. We inform M. Gouhipel that we wish to see all that there is of the oldest and most interesting in Vannes. He suggests the new cavalry barracks in course of construction; and though this hardly meets our views we assent, and the white pony trots off at the leisurely pace of a pony that knows he is working by the hour. We see many curious old bits of mediæval domestic architecture on our way up the hill to the barracks, and one old woman spinning in an upper window, who looks the image of the wicked fairy whose distaff pierced the pretty princess's palm. The barracks are to accommodate five thousand men, and will be very fine when completed. Everywhere we see new barracks building and the military life extending itself, and at least half the men we meet seem to be priests or soldiers.

From the barracks we descend the hill again, and drive along a fine boulevard by the river shaded by good old trees. Here we see the backs of some of the best houses in the place, very old and picturesque some of them, with gardens sloping down to the river. Thence to the quay, where there is a very small display of shipping; and thence to the new chapel built by the Jesuit Fathers, who have a very important scholastic establishment here. The chapel, with its lofty vaulted roof and galleries for the pupils, is beautiful, quite perfect of its kind.

We drive past two or three houses of a fine type, the real French château, *entre cour et jardin*. They look as if they belonged to the eighteenth century, and are in the occupation of *noblesse*, as our coachman proudly informed us.

We go to the other end of the town to look at the old barracks, which are certainly shabby, and the prison, which is very much like them. Then we rattle across the dreary square, an expanse of dusty gravel, past the cathedral, and back to our hotel and the comfortable *table d'hôte*, where we get an excellent dinner, prior to being taken back to the station in the useful omnibus.

We are at Auray in little more than an hour after leaving Vannes, and are driven along a newly-made boulevard to the quaint little town, where the illuminated town-clock shines out upon the dusk, and where there seems more life and bustle than usual in the street just in front of the Pavillon d'en Haut, where we take up our quarters for the night. A very comfortable *pavillon* it is, with a most agreeable hostess, and a pretty chambermaid, all smiles and good-nature, in her graceful Breton costume of dark-gray stuff trimmed with black velvet, and white-muslin cap,

collar, and sleeves. She is so pleased when we admire her dress. The hotel is deservedly popular, and the proprietor is adding two long rows of new bedrooms opening out of an airy corridor.

Alas, we have but one night to stay in Auray, and it is a place where one might well spend a week. It is the centre for all those Druidic remains in which Brittany is so rich. It is famous for its neighbouring church of St. Anne d'Auray, whither on the twenty-sixth of each July the pious Bretons make their pilgrimage. Here also is the shrine of those devoted Royalists who were executed at Auray in the latter days of the Revolution, after the luckless descent upon Quiberon. The slaughter went on for three weeks, and nearly a thousand victims were shot down and buried in a field now called the Champ des Martyrs.

Dusky as the summer night is, with the moon hidden by drifting clouds, we descend one of the steep streets to a walk overhanging the river. The night scene is eminently picturesque—villas perched high among wooded grounds on the steep slope behind us; below, an old stone bridge, the dark river, a cluster of old peaked roofs, and a barge and a brig or two lying along the shore; a dense alley of trees showing dark against the shadowy hill beyond the bridge—all things seen indistinctly in the fitful light.

We determine to get up at six next morning, and to see all we can of Auray before the ten-o'clock train carries us off to St. Brieuc. I open my window wide to let in the cool night air; and all through the night I am conscious of a perpetual perambulation of *sabots* on the stony streets. Who it is who walks about Auray all night I have no idea, but the *sabots* never cease to go clumping along the stones, and between four and five in the morning Auray has evidently begun the busy round of life and labour.

We go out in the early morning, peep in at a convent chapel where the wood floors are being polished, walk through a little grove on a hill, and ascend an observatory tower to survey the surrounding landscape. The most ancient part of the town lies below us on the other side of the bridge. We descend to the river-bank by a serpentine path, and pass below a walled garden with a vine-shaded arcade level with the top of the wall, where a priest is walking slowly up and down in the early morning reading his Breviary.

What a chapter Balzac could have written about that vine-shadowed walk and solitary priest, and the atmosphere of quiet that surrounded him!

Very quaint and curious are the narrow old streets on the other side of the bridge. Doors and windows are all open, and we see the daily life going on. Every one has a contented look, save in one alley where there is a feminine quarrel, in which sarcasm is flung from door-step to door-step in a shrill nasal that defies the English understanding. We can only catch a word here and there; but it is a wordy war of exceeding bitterness.

The church is old and curious, with several side chapels, and many of those tablets on which the pious devotee records his gratitude for mercies granted or for gifts bestowed—'reconnaissance à St. Anne,' or St. Joachim, or St. Joseph—with a date attached, a date which would doubtless recall some bitter time of trial and merciful relief—some night of sorrow followed by a morning of joy. Sometimes there is even a little picture to show the nature of the boon won by saintly intercession—a sick-bed,

a beloved child lying low. The sternest Protestant must admire and respect a faith so implicit and simple, a religion so closely allied with love.

There are two model ships hanging up in the nave, with the last improvements in ship-building—votive offerings no doubt. They look curiously modern in the gray crumbling old church.

It is market morning. As we go back to the bridge we meet women carrying their baskets of stores—a little fruit, a few dried fish, a big brown loaf—all of the humblest description. We pass the granite walls of old gardens where the figs and magnolias have grown into tall and spreading trees. There are oleanders blooming before a humble *café*—flowers and fertility everywhere.

The market is full of busy life when we get back to the centre of the town. The genteel *ménagères* of Auray are out with their *bonnes* and baskets, or in some cases carrying their own baskets, bargaining sharply for butter, and difficult to be convinced as to the freshness of eggs. There is a row of booths for toys and trinketry of the Brummagem kind outside the market.

But we must leave the fascinating scene, and hurry back to the Pavillon d'en Haut, where an exclusive breakfast is to be served for us half an hour before the *table d'hôte*, in order that we may be in time for the train. A very excellent breakfast it is, and deeply concerned is the black-eyed Spanish-looking waiter to find we are running away without seeing the lions of the neighbourhood. We pledge ourselves to come again next year—and mean it. And now the clock with its double set of hands points to half-past nine *de la ville*, which means ten minutes to ten *de la gare*, and our omnibus is ready and off we go.

It is rather a long journey from Auray to St. Brieuc, passing through Pontivy, which we are told is hardly worth seeing, and where there is not so much as a buffet. We are quite overcome by thirst by and by, and the obliging guard stops the train for an extra five minutes or so at a small station, and we go across the road to a *café* and refresh ourselves with the national cider.

St. Brieuc is a large and prosperous-looking town, with a very fine old church and a handsome new one. We saw the old church at dusk, and in that dim religious light the gray old Gothic pile struck me as more beautiful than any church we had seen in our travels. There is much variety and richness too in the exterior of the building.

There are many old half-timbered houses and picturesque narrow ways in St. Brieuc, but the general effect is more modern than any town we have seen except Rennes. Trade seems to be brisk, and improvements are going on apace. The Palais de Justice is on a hill, surrounded by well-planted gardens, from which there is a magnificent view across a wild and rocky ravine to the distant sea, and the Tour de Cesson, a large round tower, half of which was blown away by Henry IV. The part that remains serves as a seamark, and is now private property; but its noble owner is under agreement to keep it standing.

From St. Brieuc we go on by rail to Pleny-Jugon, or rather Pleny, at which wayside station we find an omnibus ready to convey us to Dinan. There are more passengers for Dinan than the omnibus will hold; but in the scramble we are lucky enough to secure places on the driver's bench, and off we go, up and down hill, through the bright fertile country,

to Jugon, a curious little town in the cleft of two hills, very humble, very obscure nowadays, but once famous for its castle, which was considered an important stronghold:

> 'Qui a Bretagne sans Jugon
> A chape sans chaperon.'

It is a long drive to Dinan. We change horses once, and stop twice for cider-drinking all round. We pass many wayside crosses of roughly-hewn granite—one with seven crosses, dedicated to Notre Dame des Douleurs. The country is delicious—orchards and cornfields, hill and valley. We come at last to a stone quarry, and the gates of the vast lunatic asylum, Les Bas Foins, kept by the Brothers of St. Jean de Dieu. It is one of the finest asylums in Europe—a noble building, with a handsome chapel, in extensive grounds, its situation on the hillside simply perfect.

Dinan was all astir with life and gaiety when we arrived, for there were to be races next day, and a *fête* in the evening. Of all the towns we had seen this good old city of Dinan struck us as by far the prettiest and best for residence, though it must be confessed that many of its streets are narrow and dirty, and that it is by no means free from the usual drawback of abominable odours.

The suburbs are magnificent; the old houses and streets full of interest, and strictly mediæval. The walls and bastion towers and city gates are in a remarkable state of preservation. There is a fine boulevard with good old well-grown trees—one of those noble avenues which recall our own splendid ancestral parks, and which one so rarely sees in France, where most of the boulevards seem to have been planted within the last three years, and to be struggling for life against all the diseases which attack an unhealthy sycamore in its infancy. This boulevard runs parallel with the city wall, which has been utilised by the inhabitants of the principal street, who have built their summer pavilions on the ramparts, and their stables against the walls—on the lean-to principle—and made their kitchen-gardens in the moat. The general effect of these various kiosks and temples, and gardens rich in standard fig-trees and magnolias, and the grand old granite wall dominating all things, is delightfully picturesque, and I cannot imagine an inhabitant of Dinan ever growing tired of this noble terrace under the tall elms.

There is another promenade as interesting, and that is the walk along the top of the ramparts on the other side of the town, overlooking the deep valley, with its little fishing-village on the banks of the Rance, and the magnificent viaduct which crosses the river at an appalling height. There is a public garden behind the church of St. Sauveur bounded by this walk; and to come upon it suddenly, as we did, on a summer's night, with a broad golden moon shining above a bank of dark cloud, is a thing to be remembered.

We were lucky enough to get comfortable rooms at the Hôtel de la Poste, in spite of the races; but a little later English travellers were sent away despairing, every room being full, and the active manageress nearly beside herself with the rush of custom. This hotel faces the Grande Place on one side, and on the other commands a view of surpassing beauty—a vast range of wooded hills, dotted about with white-walled villas, and in the middle distance the chapel of Les Bas Foins.

The churches of St. Malo and St. Sauveur are both fine. For

my own part I prefer the former, as the grander and loftier of the two. Some of the stone carved-work in the side chapels of St. Sauveur is remarkable for its richness; and here, in a Romanesque shrine, lies the heart of Du Guesclin, whose body was buried at St. Denis with the kings of France.

There is a statue, and a very bad one, of the famous knight, in the Grande Place, a dusty oblong enclosure, with an avenue of mediocre trees all round it, and wooden benches here and there.

The decoration of this place with lines of coloured lamps, in the old Vauxhall style, was going on industriously this Saturday afternoon.

After church, next morning, we proceed to the omnibus office, where the 'patron' has private carriages for hire, to see if we can, without submitting to extortion, get a carriage for an exploration of the environs—La Fontaine des Eaux, the Château of La Garaye, and some other points of interest. But we find that all available vehicles have been engaged for the races; and, perhaps yielding to a natural leaning that way, we determine to do as all Dinan is doing, and to see the races. Omnibuses are to ply to and fro between the town and the racecourse, something like three miles out, and all up hill, from one o'clock upwards; so we go and explore some of the old streets, peep into a convent chapel, admire a convent garden where two magnolia-trees are in full bloom, ask a few questions, and return to the city gates at half-past one, just in time to fill the last vacant places in an omnibus which is on the point of starting. The blue-bloused 'patron' beckons to us, and hands us in; and off we go rattling up the hill, and are soon engaged in a lively conversation with a gentleman who is taking his wife and a tiny black-and-tan terrier to the races; the dog would be unhappy if left at home, his owner informs me.

Every one is going to the races. Omnibus after omnibus passes us, drawn by four horses or two; wagonettes, carts with the peasant proprietor and his family all sitting with broad happy faces behind a very small horse. These small Breton horses, my friend informs me, are invaluable. They will work all day and be fresh to the last, are very easily fed, good-tempered, and docile, and if well groomed and corn-fed, which they never are here, would be by no means bad-looking. I long to take one of the patient little animals home to a comfortable stable, and have him fed and petted after the manner of English ponies.

The racecourse is a fine open stretch of sward on the top of the hill, a belt of trees encircling it. The whole area is enclosed, and admission only to be had by ticket. There are two public stands, and a private stand for the club. Admission to the grand stand costs two francs and a half, and from its benches we have a splendid view of the course and paddock. Blue blouses are hanging on all the trees, even to the topmost branches, at a height that looks perilous. The enclosure is girdled by serried ranks of spectators, all seeming happy and orderly. Once or twice a little knot of blouses enter the sacred precincts without tickets, but retire with ignominy before the indignant remonstrances of a member of the club. There are two or three gendarmes riding about, but they seem more for show than use, as there is nothing approaching disorder.

The races are capital, after their fashion. The first three or four are *trot montant*—trotting-matches—in one of which, for native horses, a

fine black stepper maintains a lead of half a mile or so for the whole time, and leaves his competitors nowhere. There is a spirited flat-race; a military steeplechase, well ridden by the owners of the horses; and then a steeplechase, with fifteen obstacles, for which there are only two entries, both horses ridden by English jockeys.

This last race was magnificent—as fine a display of English pluck and tenacity as was ever exhibited on Epsom Downs; and when, after a close race twice round the course, the leading horse refused a jump, lost time, and gave the advantage to his opponent, the excitement was intense. It culminated when the two horses came over the last barrier with their noses in a line; and when Waugh, flogging desperately, got his horse past the judge's chair and won by a neck, the hearty English cheers rang out a greeting for both riders, winner and loser being alike worthy of praise. The men rode back to the weighing-ground side by side like brothers.

A sunset ramble on the ramparts above the wondrous viaduct, and then for the *fête*, which is to be in its glory at nine o'clock. The Grande Place is really a pretty scene, lit by chains and festoons of many-coloured lamps, more richly than ever poor old Vauxhall was lighted in the days of its thousands of additional lamps. There is to be dance-music at nine and a ball in the dusty enclosure; but when we approach the scene, the lamps are still being lighted, and the Grande Place seems to be given over to the care of a juvenile soldier of some seventeen summers or so, who marches up and down before one of the openings, and forbids the crowd to enter.

'Allez!' he says, looking at us with intense enmity; 'allez! dehors!'

His knowledge of his native tongue seems for a long time to be confined to these two words, so incessantly does he repeat them.

'Dehors!' he cries, with a flourish of his bayonet, to another group of intruders; 'allez!'

Not feeling inclined to yield to this beardless warrior, we enter and defy him. When we have got in he evidently feels powerless to get us out, and submits with a sullen indignation, walking up and down before the opening of the Place, and giving occasional thrusts with his bayonet at small boys. But when we, with other intruders, venture to seat ourselves on the inner side of a bench under the trees, his wrath waxes hot, and he comes at us with his bayonet, and orders us off with his authoritative 'Dehors!'

We are British subjects, and our temper will not brook this tyranny.

I don't know that we particularly want to be there, for the place is crowded and dusty and the night is warm, but we are not going to be ousted by this youngster. I even feel his military grip upon my arm, and I tell him, as spokesman for my party, that we will not go.

'What?' he interrogates, 'you will not budge—you will not budge?'

And he lifts his bayonet as with direst intent; then waves it feebly, and walks off to tell a brother in arms, who evidently laughs at him; for he comes back disconcerted, and on returning finds that the crowd have by this time occupied the other and more sacred side of the bench giving on the inner parallelogram, where there is anon to be dancing.

On this his indignation culminates.

'Non, non! pas sur côté!' he cries, feeling that the citadel is taken; and after this he contents

himself by marching up and down after new-comers, like a guard of honour, muttering his 'Allez!' and 'Dehors!'

The clocks strike nine, and the band begins to play an operatic selection. Then comes dance-music, but the crowd is too deep and close for us to see the dancing. Everything is quiet, peaceable, and orderly, and we leave the crowd in the height of enjoyment. In the language of the penny-a-liner, festivities are kept up till a late hour. At the Hôtel de la Poste nobody goes to bed till two o'clock in the morning. But I go to my quiet chamber *au seconde*, and turn my back upon all the splendours of the *fête*, to see the yellow moon riding high above hill and valley and wood and water, castle and chapel, and to hear the silver chime of Les Bas Foins telling the solemn night hours.

We have been told that the steamer between Dinan and St. Malo will be much crowded on these race-days, and our days in Brittany are numbered so closely that we cannot wait till the races are over; so we lose one of the pleasures we had especially counted upon — the steamboat journey down the Rance, and go to Dinard by diligence, a lovely drive, and from Dinard across the water to St. Malo.

Of St. Malo, save that its sands and bathing are superb, there is not much to be said. It is a busy town, with good hotels. We choose the Hôtel Franklin, notable for its excellent table and well-furnished cleanly bedrooms. Chateaubriand's tomb on the Grand Bé is well worth a visit. Dinard I fancy would be a very pleasant place to stay at, but Dinan is to my mind the town of all others to delight and satisfy the English visitor. It is very easy of access. The South-Western Railway Company's steamers from Southampton to St. Malo sail three times a week—and splendid boats they are—and the steamer goes from St. Malo to Dinan every day.

GAOL-BIRDS AT HOME.

It commonly happens that when a private person, for the first time in his life, pays a visit of inspection to any one of our great prisons, he regards as the most striking feature of the establishment the meek patience and extreme docility manifested by those whose residence there is for the time compulsory. Nor is this difficult to account for. The impression prevalent amongst good honest folk, both in town and country, is that the thief, the habitual defier and setter-at-naught of the laws of his country—the individual who, daring the whole array of grim machinery invented and set in motion for the catching and caging of criminals, still makes the business of his life robbery and plunder—must be an animal not easy to tame. They—the good honest folk above mentioned—picture the incorrigible evil-doer as a ruffian of spirit, a desperate devil-may-care, for whom a gaol has no terrors, and who, knowing exactly the powers of governor and gaolers, and despising them, would make no scruple in snapping his fingers at the one, and laughing in the face of the others, and bidding them do their worst.

Taking a broad view of the matter, nothing can be more unlike reality than such a fancy picture of the incorrigible offender against the criminal law. To be sure there are exceptions to the rule. There are ruffianly gaol-birds, of a feather perhaps with the common order, inasmuch as one nest contains them, but differing in their manners and customs as vultures and crows, or eagles and sparrow-hawks. The more insignificant kind—'birds' of the sparrow-hawk and carrion-crow sort—are by far the most common creatures of prey, who prefer to operate when a victim's back is towards them, or when his weak or helpless condition renders swift retaliation unlikely.

Thievery is not a trade at which an individual is bound to grow more adept the longer he practises it. There are scores and hundreds of poor petty cobblers and bunglers at the craft who begin prison experience on the strength of 'snatching' a handkerchief at the age of nine or ten, and who, thirty years afterwards, although meanwhile they have worked diligently, and can reckon countless summary convictions against them, have not advanced beyond petty larceny, and who finally descend into their ignoble graves without having attained the honours of Portland or Chatham, or being presented by government with that certificate of merit—a ticket-of-leave.

Very different these from the birds of bolder mettle, the vultures and eagles of the fraternity, provided more formidably in the matters of length and strength of wing, and capacity of beak and talons. Of the feathered few are those who will stoop to no smaller game than a prime booty of goldsmiths' goods, or a few boxes of gold-dust in transit by railway, or the rich sacking of a widow's and orphan's assurance company, or a poor man's savings-bank. Such birds as these, however, are not snared every day; and when they are, all the town hears of it. But it is only during their trial

that even such great creatures as these appear invested with a certain degree of Brummagen heroism. It is not easy to put salt on the tails of these wily ones; and when the law has at last succeeded in doing so, money in abundance is not wanting for the employment of those who are skilful in relieving a client from the saline inconvenience mentioned. At all events, there is sure to be tremendous excitement over the matter, a crowded court and piecemeal account, supplied hour by hour, in the newspapers. But it is extraordinary when the affair has reached its most thrilling stage, and public expectation stands breathless and a-tiptoe for the result, what a sudden ending it all has. 'Guilty,' says the jury. 'Two years' hard labour,' pronounces his lordship from the judicial bench; and from that very instant almost the bitterness of the sentence begins to operate. 'The unfortunate gentleman at the bar,' as, in a voice betokening at least brotherly sympathy, the learned counsel retained for the defence has but just now called him, is, by the judge's few brief words, for the time as effectually cut off from the world as though the dock in which he lately stood was a coffin, and the law had clapped the lid on. Before his eloquent friend, the counsel, has changed his wig and gown for a civilised costume, the pale wretch, still wearing his gentlemanly attire and his rings and watch-chain, and still with his flowing beard adorning his chin, and his luxuriant hair brushed to the best advantage, has been taken 'below,' and is cooling his heated blood in one of a range of tiny dungeons with a grated door, common to the day's batch of convicted felons who, when the court rises, are to be carted off to Holloway or Coldbath-fields. There may be a certain amount of truth in the popular reproach, that there is one law for the rich, and another for the poor; but of a surety the distinction has its bounds. By no chance does it pass the prison-portals. The hearse-like vehicle containing the bodies of those who, for a period, have departed from free life, arrives at the dreadful doors; they swing open; but so jealously, that they are slammed to again, so as almost to graze the wheels of the black coach as it enters; and from that time the swell swindler and the most uninteresting common 'prig' of the vehicle's freight are as one. There is in attendance, in the gaol-lobby, a small committee of reception —the photographer, who takes the portraits of the newly arrived; the warder, who records their height and their weight, and who 'books' them generally for future identity; the tailor, who takes their measure—with his eye, accuracy of fit being by no means an important consideration—for the felon's suit of gray; and the governor or his deputy, to give a receipt for 'prisoners delivered.' And, O, the 'glorious uncertainty' of the law! It *might* have happended that the swell swindler would have been acquitted. There was a chance of it anyhow, or where was the good of paying such a great sum of money to the lawyer to show his innocence? 'Guilty,' said the jury; but it was not impossible that they would have prefixed the small word 'Not;' and what a different state of things would have ensued! Home, liberty, the congratulations of friends, the kisses of children, and the thankful embracing of a wife, perhaps; wine-drinking, hand-shaking, and rejoicing generally. The necessary little 'Not' would have stood good for all this.

For lack of it, there, in an arched little cell, with walls and roof ghastly white, and a floor black and shiny as a pool of ink, is slung from wall to wall, by means of bright iron hooks and rings, a clean coarse canvas hammock; and by the light which comes in through the chequer-work of stout iron at one end, may be seen a doleful figure of a man in bed, with his face wofully hidden in his bolster, the crisp straw stuffing of which rustles audibly with the violence of his motion. The tears which course down his cheeks find no hindrance, for the luxuriant beard has been shorn by the gaol-barber's shears, and the gaol-razor has shaved clean the stubble, and chin and upper lip feel strangely bare and smooth and burning hot. Those luxuriant curls, with which Mr. Truefitt's young man took such pains, now lie mingling in the same dustbin with the oily side-locks—the cherished 'Newgate' which so recently adorned the bullet-shaped cranium of 'lummy' Jack Fakeaway, the pride of Dudley-street, Seven Dials. The shirt the weeping prisoner wears is so rough, that it rasps his delicate skin. It is of blue-and-white check, like a kitchen-duster, and fastens at the neck and wrist with heavy bone buttons. But worse than all is the clothes he is doomed to wear. His own faultlessly-made garments are stowed away where they will never again see the light for two long years. The entire suit is made up into a neat parcel, and to it are attached his glossy hat and his patent-leather shoes; and the whole reposes in a pigeon-hole in a gloomy underground cupboard, in company with three hundred and fifty other felons' suits, all ticketted, and awaiting the day of redemption, like pledges in the keeping of uncle Pawnbroker. But the attire that he must don to-morrow! It is hanging across the stool, just by the sink, and consists of a pair of trousers of some horrible pepper-and-salt-hued material, altogether unknown in the land of liberty, and as shapeless as a meal-bag. Still more heart-breaking to contemplate is the upper vestment, a sort of compromise between a smock-frock and a jacket, of the same detestable material, buttoning so high at the throat that the collar of it almost touches the ears, and sufficiently short in the arms to admit of thoroughly free play for the wrists at hard labour.

But the poor remorse-stricken wretch may cry his eyes out, or nearly, and nothing will come of it, except perhaps a little lotion to bathe them with when the gaol-doctor examines him in the morning. He'll get better. To-morrow he may sit sobbing in agony over his breakfast, weakening his panikin of gruel with tears of bitterness, and which in that adulterated state returns untouched to the kitchen; but in a day or two he will find that it is not so unpalatable as it looks, and ere a week has passed he will 'lick the platter clean,' and wish for a little more.

It is not the purpose of this paper, however, to treat of prisoners in durance. Its title might suggest otherwise, since the real thoroughbred gaol-bird is more 'at home' in prison than out. Undoubtedly he is better off 'on the wrong side of the spikes' than when, with that inborn love of liberty, which is the birthright of Britons, he is free to roam on the right side. It is the easiest thing in the world to prove this in the most conclusive manner. Let any person who would like to test it place himself in a position

to observe a discharge of prisoners from the gaol, the term of their sentence having expired, and those who come to meet them there. Except in romance, it has never yet been satisfactorily demonstrated that there is honour amongst thieves; but unquestionably there is a great amount of kindly feeling and good-fellowship, especially amongst the younger sort—boys and youths of from twelve to eighteen. So far as may be judged, the captive himself does not more anxiously count the few remaining days and hours that as yet stand between himself and emancipation than does his stanch 'pals' of the outer world. So sure as the heavy door turns on its hinges to deliver him to the tender mercies of the world, does he see advancing towards him, with hands extended and glad countenances, his boon companions, who are generally glad to have him amongst them again, and are anxious to spend their present stock of ready-money—realised possibly from the sale of stolen goods an hour or two before—in standing beer and something handsome for dinner in celebration of the joyous event. But the difference between the newly-released young gaol-bird and his friends who have enjoyed the doubtful advantage of an unusually long spell of freedom! The former, whose term of incarceration has been perhaps six months, though unmistakably of the same breed as his companions, is as different in appearance as brass in the dross and brass when it leaves the hands of the finisher. Clean and fresh-complexioned is the young gaol-bird whose wings have been so recently clipped; his eyes are bright and clear, his skin glows with the hue of health, his hair, by nature scarcely less stubborn than his obdurate heart, has been temporarily tamed, and lies sleek and docile. But how is it with his young friends? The result of association with everything that is bad—bad food, bad lodging, bad drink, bad company—is as plainly marked on every face as though scored there with a pencil. They are dirty ragged beggars, and, for all their make-believe of jollity, anxious and hungry-looking. Their friend has been punished, the utmost severity of the law has overtaken him, and he has felt the full weight of its chastening hand; and the result is that his health is as much benefited as, perhaps even more than, if he had been sent to Brighton or Scarborough for a season. It is more than probable that these young gaol-birds, who have been so fortunate as to escape the fowler, would be averse to such an arrangement; but there can be no doubt that the very best thing that could happen to them would be for the next policeman they met to take them into custody on suspicion, so that they might be delivered over to the gaol authorities for a course of treatment similar to that which their friend has undergone. I have a very vivid recollection of being on one occasion on the prison premises when the van arrived, bringing amongst others a horribly dirty and neglected-looking little wretch of about twelve years old. An old thief, as the governor informed me; but from some cause or other he must of late have been terribly out of luck. His filthy clothes were mere rags; his hair as disgusting to look on as that of an Australian bushman; his face pinched with cold and care and hunger. He might have been a younger brother of Jo of *Bleak House* celebrity, but without the picturesqueness which distinguished that young fellow's poverty, and without the industry which

made Jo the owner of a crossing-sweeping broom. 'How long this time, Isaac?' a fatherly warder in attendance asked him with a pitying nod of recognition. 'Four munce this 'ere once,' replied the little wretch, not with a sigh for the long term, but with an unmistakable lighting up of his cadaverous face, as though grateful for the favour conferred on him. And not without reason. Two hours afterwards it occurred to me to ask what had become of him, and I was shown to his cell. Isaac was already enduring the punishment to which the worthy magistrate had condemned him. He had enjoyed what to one in his deplorable condition must have been the indescribable luxury of a warm bath. His hair was cropped comfortably short; his very ears shone, shiny and pink, from his recent tremendous washing; he had partaken of a panikin and three-quarters of a pound of bread, and was comfortably tucked between the rugs of his hammock. I could not help thinking, as I gazed on the well-bestowed Isaac, that he would have furnished a queer picture for a magic-lantern slide, to be dubbed 'Honesty is the Best Policy,' and added to the pictorial moral-lesson department of the school attached to St. Grudgeabone's Workhouse.

To return, however, to the young fellow just released from gaol, and welcomed at its gates by his faithful friends. They are far gone towards that state of dilapidation in which Isaac was discovered when he made his last unsuccessful attempt at stealing; but it is not very likely they will envy their chum his cleanliness when he himself fails to appreciate its advantage. It is the latter, indeed, who derives a feeling of dissatisfaction from contrasting his condition with theirs. He is conscious that his clothes, from being bundled away so long, are full of tell-tale creases; the uproarious hair of his mates is preferable to his own, so sleek and smooth, inasmuch as it furnishes undeniable evidence of long immunity from gaol-scissors. He is uncomfortably aware of a certain stiffness of gait, of an inclination to bend his knees and raise his feet from the ground with considerably more 'action' than ordinary pedestrian exercise demands, and which he knows arises from familiarity with the treadmill. But these disagreeable sensations will soon wear off.

'Now, my lad,' remarked to him the prison governor, who is as kind-hearted an old gentleman as may be found in England,—'now, my lad, when you get away from this place, I do trust that this time you will keep your vow, and try to be honest.'

'I will so, sir,' snivels the young incorrigible.

'That is right. Shun all bad company. Face the devil boldly, and he will flee from you. Avoid all your wicked companions, and seek to walk in the paths of virtue. Resolve, when these doors close against you, that they have done so for the last time.'

Excellent advice, but as hard to follow as for him to perform a certain lunar exploit with which a cow is credited. It is difficult, indeed, to point out with whom the blame rests, or whether by any means such a lamentable condition of affairs can be altered; but the fact is, that to a thief just discharged from gaol, and so circumstanced—an old and so-called incorrigible offender, that is to say—the 'paths of virtue' are tabooed. There is no admission for him. Should he try it with the shame-faced and awkward manner of one essaying a strange

calling, the police would be 'down on him' before he had defiled twenty yards of the paths of virtue by walking there.

'Hullo, you sir, what are *you* doing here?' his intimate acquaintance, the policeman, would ask him.

'O, if you please, sir, I am in search of a honest livelihood. Could you be so kind as to put me in the way of it?'

If there is one thing more than another detestable to a police-officer, on duty and in uniform, it is to have fun poked 'at him.'

'If you don't precious soon move on out o' this, you bare-faced young wagabon,' says X 909, 'I'll precious soon put you where you'll be found in the morning.'

The habitual gaol-bird, however, has no disposition to embark in what he knows, or thinks he knows, would terminate in ignominious failure. Even were he well provided and equipped for the novel exploration, the paths of virtue would have led him to regions as strange as though he were landed at the Antipodes. He has no friends in the land of honesty and respectability; yet he has but to accept the generous invitation of his old comrades, and in a little while he will be amongst familiar faces, and certain of a cheery greeting; this, whichever way it may be viewed, is something after six months' banishment. So the little party renew the severed bond of brotherhood over a pot of beer, and in half an hour the young fellow is at home again.

In other words, he goes back once more to a life of crime with all its anxieties and discomforts, trusting to luck as to the length of the tether he may be allowed before he is brought up short with a hand on his collar, and the magistrate assigns him a new lease of his old lodgings. It must not be imagined, however, that the thief leaves gaol with the hope and even the expectation of making his 'holiday' a merry, though possibly a short, one. There is an erroneous supposition amongst innocent folk that the 'makings' of a London thief are something considerable, enabling the rascal, while he is able to enjoy liberty, to live like the proverbial fighting cock. They, the innocent, peruse official reports, in which it is set forth with minutest detail how much money or money's worth is lost to respectable society annually by the rapacious army of rogues and robbers; the result being that each one must come into possession of several pounds weekly, enabling them to lead a life of riot and extravagance amongst their gay male and female companions. It would much amaze those who are misled to the above opinion, could they visit the localities where the main body of the predatory army take up their quarters. There are certain streets, east, west, north, and south of London, known to the police as being inhabited almost entirely by a class of persons who know the flavour of but two kinds of bread, that which is gained by plunder, and that which is dealt out to them by the gaol-warder—persons who do not supplement a precarious livelihood by resorting to dishonest practices when opportunity serves, but who, when they rise in the morning, are complacently aware that there will be no dinner or tea until some one of the family can contrive to steal the means to get the one or the other. It certainly appears strange that it should be true of a city which boasts of being the richest and best officered in the world, that it should in a dozen different parts tolerate

breeding and abiding places for thieves; but it is nevertheless strictly true. And such places as they are, these 'homes' of the common gaol-bird—the most squalid, the most poverty-stricken and miserable! For the most part the said streets consist of common lodging-houses, and it is the lowest and most loosely conducted of these that the individuals in question affect. They have no fancy for a fixed abode. Practically it makes really no difference; for, provided a sufficient description of a known thief is lodged at a station-house, the police have scarcely more difficulty in finding him than the man who turns on the fire-plug, or any other public servant whose name and address are advertised. But the gaol-bird in the enjoyment of a spell of free flight prefers the widest scope for evasion procurable. The common lodging-house affords this. Under the lodging-house-keepers licensing act the police are at all hours of the day and night privileged to enter the premises and make search for a 'party' they may suspect to be harboured there; and though this may be a disadvantage to a man who never can be sure, when he puts out his candle and turns over to compose himself to slumber, that his eyes may not next open to the dazing glare of a policeman's bull's-eye lantern, still there is the compensation of a landlord who endeavours to make himself agreeable to his customers by an arrangement known as 'running with the hare, and holding with the hounds.' A nod is as good as a word to a delinquent known to the police; and should the landlord or the 'deputy,' who sits at the door, make any one of a dozen well-understood signs as the wary one is about to enter, he takes himself off again without delay to try his fortune elsewhere.

But at best, and with most extraordinary good fortune in the way of steering clear of the law's handy instruments of repression, what is there in the free existence of a thief of the common sort—and it must be borne in mind that seven out of every ten are of this sort—that he should cling so tenaciously to it and eschew the ways of honesty? His occupation does not yield him decent clothes to wear, as is plainly shown by the fact that common thieves, young and old, whenever they appear in a criminal dock; are the seediest of the seedy. It does not yield him food in plenty, or a comfortable bed to lie on. His constant life is a dog's life—that of a cur of the kennel, who, at peril of limb and liberty, must snatch his every morsel of food before he may eat it. He is cut off from every social blessing which makes life endurable—from home, from wife, children, everything. He is a man who, however great his trouble, dare not offer up a prayer for relief on the promise of an amended life for the future, for that would be so brazen a lie that he would not dare utter it. In short, the habitual gaol-bird is so everlastingly a miserable creature as to make one doubt if the right means have been yet taken to reclaim him.

'YES!'

Dear hiding-place, I pray you keep
This secret in your breast;
O, fold it sure and fold it fast,
And let it safely rest!
And let it rest and let it lie
Till paling sky shall show
Through pearly pallor softly gray
The flush of morning's glow.

For then—while dawn is still a dream,
And all is hush'd and still—
Some one will cross the dewy fields
That spread below the hill;
Will swiftly pass through flowering aisles,
And crush the petals sweet—
Dear hiding-place, I pray you lay
My secret at his feet!

Ah, cold and lifeless seems the word
My trembling hand has traced;
He will not guess the thousand hopes
That with that word are placed!
O, will he guess or will he know?
Dear blossoms at my feet,
Look up and whisper faint and low:
I long his eyes to meet.

Ah, happy letter, you will feel
His touch so light and true!
Ah, happy hand that draws you forth,
I would that I were you!
I would and would not—love and fear
Make up so large a sum
Within my foolish heart to-day,
The heart that he has won.

O, have I lived or have I loved
In any years before?
For now I cannot dream of joy,
Save with him evermore.
I waste the days, the nights, the hours,
In thoughts that come and go;
And yet in all their circling flight,
One name alone they know.

O lavish lights and floating shades,
I would you were no more;
Fly down and haunt the midnight glades,
And tell me day is o'er!
Dear ivy, keep my secret safe;
Like him, you cannot guess
That life and love are centred here
Where I have written—Yes!

Dear ivy, keep my secret safe ;
    Like him, you cannot guess
That life and love are centrèd here,
    Where I have written—Yes!

See the Poem.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE KNIGHT OF THE SWAN.

I WAS reading the *Franconian Gazette*. Suddenly I looked up and said,

'Eva, let us go to Würzburg.'

'To Würzburg! Why?'

'It is one of the most interesting towns in Germany. Grey says so; Bædeker says so. It is an episcopal see.'

'So are Sodor and Man.'

'There is a regal palace, a favourite promenade, and a spacious commercial school.'

'But we are not archduchesses, nor a brass band, nor going into business,' she pleaded.

'It is the burial-place of Vogelweid the Minnesinger. Happy thought for your next picture: the choristers of Würzburg minster feeding the birds at Walther's tomb, in obedience to his last will and testament.'

'But I think I could paint that without going all the way to Würzburg.'

'How unenterprising you are! But listen. They are going to give a grand performance of *Lohengrin* at the Würzburg opera-house the day after to-morrow.'

'But is it likely to be one worth hearing in such a small town?'

'Don't interrupt. "Elsa, Fräulein Elizabeth Müller; Lohengrin, Herr Theodore Marston."'

'O, let us go!' exclaimed Eva, with alacrity.

'Exactly; that is what I have been saying this half hour. The first step will be to prepare Frau Richter's mind.'

Frau Richter, be it observed, was beginning to get accustomed to our ways, even when they were not as her ways or those of her countrywomen. Germans transplanted into English soil are known to prove themselves the most receptive people in the world, and mere intercourse with English women had told in a wonderful manner on our good landlady. Nay, it is to be feared that, could the departed deplored Richter have come to life again at this time, he would have been utterly aghast at the rise and progress of independent ideas, the general domestic enlightenment going on under his roof, and have charged Eva and myself bitterly with demoralising his household.

Two days after we started on our excursion, reaching Würzburg in time to secure places at the theatre for the evening.

Lovers of local colour will nowhere find more of it left than in old German cities such as Ulm, Augsburg, Nürnberg, Würzburg, and others. Curiously unchanged in character, parts of them have stood since the time when Wohlgemüth painted and Ofterdingen sang, thus affording to this day better illustrations of old German history and literature than are left of the kind to England and France of theirs.

But no time was ours for sightseeing that evening. We were in Germany, and the opera began at six. We swallowed a hasty meal, and rushed off to the theatre.

'Why, what a grave and orderly looking audience!' observed Eva, as we took our seats.

'Congregation, you mean,' said I, impressed. We might have been at a meeting in Exeter Hall. The fashionable nonchalance that haunts our opera-stalls at home, the shabby gentility that haunts the gallery, were here alike conspicuous by their absence. Serene gravity sat on every countenance. It is difficult for us English to realise how to the Germans the opera is no light show or amusement, but a serious business like their dinner, and which they sit down to discuss in much the same solemn and deliberate fashion.

Presently we were startled by an extraordinary burst of applause. The curtain had not risen yet, nor the overture begun. This spontaneous shout had been roused by the entrance of the conductor, and grew to such a jubilee as at last forced him reluctantly to turn and bow his acknowledgment. It was Herr von Zbirow.

Great was our surprise. For—though we vaguely knew him to be in *villeggiatura* in the neighbourhood—he held no regular conductor's post here or elsewhere. But the present was a grand occasion, the anniversary of a royal birth, christening, confirmation, or wedding day—I forget which—but in honour of it he had, it appeared, been induced to assume the bâton.

He cut short the applause without ceremony by giving his orchestra the signal to strike up the prelude. Music of the future, they call it, some sarcastically, some enthusiastically. Be that as it may, a music of dreamland and moonlight, of distance and enchantment, and mysteries of sweetness and sadness.

The orchestra was small, and probably second rate. The perfection of their playing to-night was astounding, but that was the work of their leader. Von Zbirow seemed to radiate inspiration as suns radiate heat. Will they, nill they, his band *must* catch his zeal, self-forgetfulness, concentration of purpose and energy. To be lazy, careless, or apathetic under the spell of those meteoric eyes was about as easy as to keep still under the action of a galvanic battery.

Now enter Elsa, the heroine of the night, a pretty thing with floss-silk hair, the sweetest eyes, the most ingenuous child-like face in the world, and a touch of reckless, wilful spirit in her expression which added greatly to its charm, but which, when it showed itself practically in liberties taken with the music and the time, acted upon the conductor in an opposite fashion. A little singer born on the stage, and bearing about her passport to it on her fair face, withal one of those helpless hopeless darlings, thanks to whom circumstance will never want for playthings. Circumstance may exalt, circumstance may drag them down, but in neither case will the darling complicate matters by offering the faintest resistance. Perfectly good-natured, guided by instinct unchecked, she lives in a little world of her own, where paradise means money, and money means idleness, suppers, and fun. Those laughing blue eyes of hers see no further. As well expect those untutored races who can only count up to five to master the mysteries of mathematics as that such as she should understand any of the intricacies of the labyrinth we live in.

But there was something in the young lady's very helplessness so appropriate to her part to-night that it was easy to identify her with Wagner's heroine, the maiden falsely accused, standing there with clasped hands, succumbing unresistingly to her fate, and look-

ing round for a deliverer to drop from the clouds.

Fortunately we are on the stage, not in real life, so the deliverer drops accordingly. The usual thrill of excitement kindled everybody in the house as the ring of that wondrous, rousing chorus hailed the approach of Lohengrin in his swan-drawn skiff.

As Theodore Marston stepped from the boat and advanced, flattering murmurs more or less audible broke from all the ladies in the house. Part was a tribute to his striking costume of white chain armour, part to his handsome countenance, but his manner and bearing besides were perfect. A startling change from the time of his *début* in London. Then he had fallen into the unpardonable sin of giving himself airs before his audience, disregarding their presence and their judgment too overtly. It is difficult for a young stager, not to the manner born, to find that graceful medium, the point of acknowledging without truckling to the public, but Theodore Marston had learnt to hit it.

In the part of the Knight of the Swan again he had fallen on his feet. Unchanged, unchangeable, his nature is undiminished in force and passion, and still without the softer subtler shades of an affection that loses itself in its object. He may act them, but cannot feal them, and such acting —an imitation from without, and not a reflection from within—is less telling, less true. But Lohengrin is his own master from first to last—provokingly so. No love-lorn swain of a tenor was Elsa's wooer, but the knight protector, champion, and judge. For the rest, the orchestra played like one man, and that man a master; the chorus, from sheer spirit, came near to genuine excellence, the minor parts were well filled, and Elsa was too pretty a vocal picture to excite criticism. But the focus of attraction was Theodore Marston. Not an eye ever left him whilst he was on the stage; he was revelling in the full swing of that despotism it is an actor's privilege to exercise over his audience. Call it brief, or vain, or what you will. We, its slaves, sneer at it, analyse it critically, and helplessly submit to it the next moment. The 'poor player' frets and struts away his hour on the stage, and there is an end of him. As if hours could not hold other things besides minutes! They should be valued according to what they contain. May not Mario's or Grisi's hour be well worth another's decade?

Lastly, he was at home in that declamatory lyrical drama, to which his rich voice and power of vivid expression lent themselves extremely well. Youth, beauty, passion, music, divinities all, we see their impersonation in this Knight of the Swan; and their fourfold fascination is upon us, as on his bride Elsa, standing there so still, so white, so meek, until—true daughter of Eve that she is—she has coaxed, forced from him at last the fatal secret, a breach of faith whereby she forfeits her bliss at the eleventh hour.

And when at the close Lohengrin, the remorseless, takes a final farewell of everybody with some deliberation, departs mysteriously as he came, and vanishes away in the distance, the audience seemed more reluctant than Elsa herself to see the last of him that night. They must recall him again and again, with his Elsa and without —for the lion's share of enthusiasm fell to him without question—till, recollecting themselves, they raised a unanimous shout for Von

Zbirow. When at last he tardily responded, suffering Theodore Marston to lead him on, there uprose a hearty cheer, not to be despised by English throats for being given seldomer and with more discrimination.

The play was over, but not the stage effect. That could not go off at a moment's notice, or evaporate in clapping of hands. We were music-intoxicated. Placid Eva herself looked a little mad; and I felt roused by what I had seen—reckless, ready for anything—anything, that is, except for what we were going to do next, return to the inn, take tea, and go to bed.

But just as we were leaving the house, Von Zbirow, who must have singled us out from the crowd in the theatre, came hastening, and presented himself before us in the passage.

'Good-evening, ladies; I was never more surprised, more pleased, in the whole course of my existence;' and we returned the compliment, of course. 'You have come to Würzburg for to hear *Lohengrin?*' he said approvingly.

'We came to hear Theodore Marston, a countryman and an acquaintance of ours besides, you know,' I replied, with perhaps unnecessary candour.

'What, you know him? Ah, to be sure, I had forgot. Well, you must come, then, and congratulate him on his great success. He has surprised us all—himself too. I was delighted with him, and go to tell him so.' Then he hesitated. 'A few of them have promised to come out to sup with me at my little house, and I have the honour to invite you. Will you join us?'

'The honour is ours, *Meister*,' said I politely.

'He comes; and Fräulein Müller comes, and her aunt, and the first trombone, and the leader of the violins, both excellent gentlemen, and of my best friends. Where now are you staying—at the Three Kings? Exactly; and it is a right good inn, but the supper at my villa you will like yet better. I know the bill of fare at the Three Kings. Ham uncooked, sour salad, bones of chicken, and plum jam—all very good things; but English prejudices! Besides, there will be a smoky heat; but an artist supper out of the town, where I live by the river-side, will be one pleasant change. Is it yes, or no? Yes? That is right. Then follow me.'

We followed him; down mysterious, uneven, dark, strait and narrow ways to the back—I beg pardon—the stage-door, where a little knot of students and idlers were assembled to see Elsa come out.

Theodore Marston was there already, and we exchanged friendly greetings.

Elsa kept her admirers a long time waiting; and Von Zbirow nearly went into a fit with impatience. At last she appeared, marshalled by her aunt. He hurried them and his two orchestral friends into the first carriage; put us, Theodore, and himself into another, and off we drove. It was early still—only nine o'clock.

'Now of all the meetings that ever were met,' ejaculated Mr. Marston, looking bewildered from Eva to myself, beginning all of a sudden to realise his surprise, 'this is the strangest.'

'Not so strange,' said Eva. 'We were at Ludwigsheim, wanted to see Würzburg and to hear *Lohengrin*—'

'And to hear you,' I continued for her. 'Carpet-bags, droschky, ticket, express-train, inn, opera-stalls; it all follows as easily as possible.'

'And *Lohengrin*, how did it go? Elsa was divine, was she not?'

'*Sapperment*,' muttered Von Zbirow impatiently; 'whom shall we adore next?'

'Insensible man, you are blind to her beauty.'

'Until I take off my spectacles—'

'Ah, now you want to exasperate me.'

'I want to exasperate no one. She is a silly girl, who sings like a serinette, and talks all what nonsense comes into her head.'

'She has a lovely face,' said I.

'Thanks,' said Theodore gratefully. 'Never mind, *Meister;* believe me, she will create the part of the heroine charmingly in your new opera.'

'Fräulein Elizabeth Müller sing in my opera! Please the Lord, she shall never have the chance given her to—to *miscreate* any work of mine,' said Von Zbirow grandly.

Mr. Marston burst into a peal of laughter. He seemed to take particular pleasure in advertising his admiration of the young lady in the presence of the *Meister*, whose aversion to her, in her artistic capacity at least, was equally undisguised.

The villa we were now approaching stood on the shady slope of the hills bordering the Main, about a mile from the town.

'Three year ago he was an inn,' observed Von Zbirow, as we dismounted—'the White Owl. I bought him for to make of him my most private residence. So I have come in to all the special advantages of the hostelry—apartments large and small, spacious smoking-room, garden. Ah, you will see.'

It was a white house, near the highway, but judiciously screened off by trees. Quite a modest little roadside inn, that had needed very slight metamorphosis to become a wayward, solitary musician's lair.

The master admitted us with a ponderous latch-key. Inside, all was pitch-dark. He apologised; and led on by him, we groped our way to a very small dining-room on the ground-floor at the back, overlooking the garden.

'Know you I have only one servant,' said Von Zbirow, beginning to be nervous, as he fumbled for a light; 'I hope all will be in order, as I strictly enjoined that it should be.'

CHAPTER XX.

A SYMPOSIUM.

A PARTY of eight, we filled the little room, which was, moreover, in an overflowing state of disorder that looked chronic and incurable; the chairs crammed with books and music-paper, the stove heaped with letters, a large inkstand on the window-seat, and a cat curled up in the centre of the plates and dishes.

'Justina, Justina, where art thou?' cried Von Zbirow, calling in a lamentable voice upon the servant. 'Canst thou not count? or how dost thou not perceive that thou hast laid the supper-table for four alone?'

Theodore was laughing immoderately. 'Fräulein Elizabeth, will you take the seat of honour on the piano? Miss Noel, let me offer you the wood-basket. As for us men, we must accommodate ourselves upon the floor;' but that, also, was well occupied with music-books and waste-paper.

'What am I to do?' groaned Von Zbirow, in despair.

'An idea,' said Theodore suddenly.

'O man of genius, communicate it—quick.'

'Just to transport table, chairs, supper, and ourselves into the garden. It is a fine night; and there is room outside for us all, and as many uninvited guests besides as may happen to turn in.'

It was like a transformation-scene. In three minutes our double quartett were seated round the table on the turf in the garden, to the utter consternation of the servant, a gaunt German maid-of-all-work, who had put in a tardy appearance, but only to look on mute with disapproval.

'Upon my soul, Theodore, but thou art a wonderful man,' sighed Von Zbirow admiringly, 'and worth all those stupid fellows of Bavarian waiters. Come here, Justina; take a lesson from this gentleman. He has been at a *café* in Paris. If ever you leave the stage, Theodore, rely on my recommendation as a *garçon*.'

Von Zbirow presided at the top of the table, in his very happiest mood. He had come down from his pedestal of genius, laid aside his haughty dignity and keen disdain, to become, if for this occasion only, as other men, only more amiable, amusable, and lively than most. On his right sat Fräulein Müller's aunt.

'Look at her well,' whispered Theodore to me, 'and say if aunts are not an admirable institution. But whether Fräulein Elizabeth's is genuine, or comes from the office at Berlin, where they let them out on hire at moderate charges, is what I have never been able to find out.'

'As a professional aunt she ought really to command a very high salary,' I replied gravely.

There surely could not have been a more first-rate impersonation of the character. She looked like a dragon but thought like the serpent, for she wisely behaved like a lamb.

On her other side sat the trombone, a German of the Germans, whose running conversation was evidently immensely diverting, both to her and to himself, to whom it appeared to be chiefly addressed. Instead of talking, he thought and felt aloud.

Next to him came Eva, carrying on a curious dialogue, mostly in pantomime, with her neighbour, the first violin, who, like herself, was no linguist. Then came Elsa, and by her side, Theodore, dividing his attentions with scrupulous impartiality between her and myself.

The fishermen on the Main that night must have been not a little astonished at the repeated sounds of mirth that kept echoing from the invisible garden behind the ex-roadside inn.

'I have no Roman emperor's feast for you, my friends,' began Von Zbirow; 'who sups with me, sups with a hermit. What have we first? Sardines and sausages, tea and—ah, *Sapperment!*' fiercely; then to the servant, in the softest of voices, 'Justina, didst not thou order that cake?'

'*Mein Herr*, did I not? But'—severely—'your cat has eaten the top off.'

'Ah, animal—and an epicure too! Well, well; here is the bread. Schlosser, pray uncork the Leistenwein. Have a care; you are pouring it into Fräulein Elizabeth's tea. Mercy! are there only two glasses amongst— Justina—you know she pretend to be deaf—thou art gone already. Well, we must use the teacups.'

'Here's a nice bit of fifth-act decoration for you,' began Theodore soothingly; 'garden, statues, roses, moonlight.'

'And sardines,' interrupted Elsa; 'may I trouble you—'

'O, supper is picturesque too—the meal musical *par excellence*,'

remarked Von Zbirow. 'Justina, Justina—that girl! She never will sit up after ten. There used to be more than one knife in my establishment. Where is the other?'

'I have it, Doctor,' said a trombonian voice from the side of the table.

'Then lend it me, after a reasonable time, unless—unless I can find a substitute in my pocket. Ha! a paper-cutter; the very thing!'

'Only look at Theodore,' said Elsa, laughing; 'he has finished the sardines; hoped he wasn't noticed in the dark.'

'Schlosser,' said Von Zbirow to the first violin, 'give our robust tenor the sausages; but help thyself first, if thou purposest to partake of the dish. He's voracious.'

'It's the open air,' said Theodore apologetically. 'You'll find it expensive, Doctor, giving supper-parties out of doors.'

'I trust only that Justina has put out the right wine,' said our host, peering anxiously at the bottle before him. 'She pretend she cannot read the labels, and treated a visitor of hers to my best Johannisberger the other day.'

'A song, a song!' cried Theodore, uplifting his glass. 'Silence; Fräulein Elizabeth will now give us her celebrated *brindisi*.'

'He may well call it hers,' put in Von Zbirow, in a spiteful whisper aside to me. 'It is her single, her orphan song. She took one year to learn it—that was three years ago; and it has lasted her ever since. Come, my most beautiful,' he resumed aloud to her, 'we are all listening—moon and stars, bats, snails, worms, and men!'

'Ah, but, Doctor, you make me nervous. I wish you would not look at me.'

'*Ach!* what can it signify, when you know how blind I am, and that I cannot tell Franz from his trombone when the table is between?'

'Well, here goes. Eh, Theodore, what an appetite you *have* brought with you to-night! That dish of pears will be empty before my song is over, and I have set my heart upon the yellow one. Keep it for me, Schlosser, there's a dear.'

And she stood up and dashed off her *brindisi* with spirit, flourishing a little glass. Von Zbirow leant back and shut his eyes whilst it was going on. All the rest applauded, especially in the weakest parts, as at wedding-breakfast speeches; but the Doctor did not recover his spirits until it was well over.

'Now, Theodore, your turn,' said he, reviving, as Elsa sat down again.

The young man responded by breaking off-hand into a well-known composition of the Doctor's. It was a Persian drinking-song, one of a cycle, and followed at its close by a duet. At this point Theodore made a sign to Elsa to join in. She did not see the instinctive movement of the Doctor's hands to his ears, but replied innocently,

'O, don't ask me to sing that, and by heart too; I don't remember a note of it.'

'*You* do,' said Von Zbirow, suddenly wheeling round to me, with an imperative gesture. 'Go on, Theodore, I tell you.'

And we sang—the everlasting old refrain of roses and love and wine, the sun, songs, and black eyes. The red drops sparkled in the glass, and the golden stars of love shone in the sky. Now, could anything have been more trite, more hackneyed? But music has power to impart eternal youth, and the elixir of melody created

these worn phrases afresh, endowing them with who knows what meaning, what power, what mystery!

Von Zbirow's setting was singular and plaintive. Often he had made me go over it with him, supplying with his husky composer's accents the part now sung out by Theodore's rich fresh voice *con amore.*

'Beautiful,' sighed the first violin, but shaking his head; for the more outward things pleased him, the more it seemed to incline him to lapse into melancholy; 'too beautiful, Doctor, I fear, for this prejudiced, prosaic, unsympathetic age.'

'What nonsense do you talk!' growled Von Zbirow sharply.

'For the public, Doctor, for the public,' he explained mournfully.

'I do not write for the mob; I write for artists,' retorted the *Meister.*

'But the artists depend, so to speak, on the public, who—'

'Pays them, do you mean?' caught up Von Zbirow promptly. 'Yes; and there are artists who never even ask themselves what is good or great, but only what will pay. Artists you call them; I call them hucksters, mountebanks, vagabond adventurers,' savagely.

'Gently, gently, Doctor,' cried Theodore, laughing; 'you are too severe on us by half. Pay is one of the safest proofs the world can give of its admiration. Say that artists only consider what will please.'

'That sounds better,' said I.

'But means the same,' replied the Doctor inexorably. 'The public is an ass. Should, therefore, the artist bray to excite his sympathies?'

'The public is a child,' said Theodore; 'and the artist has to educate him. He will never succeed by forcing on him what is distasteful.'

'Thou art a child thyself, my Theodore. The public will never come to years of discretion. So the artist, who wish always to stand well with him, must make up his mind never to go beyond the musical alphabet.'

'And at all events draw the line at the music of the future,' said Theodore slyly.

'Music of the future?' repeated Von Zbirow, eyeing him with compassion; 'and what, pray, has thy wise head got to say about that?'

'That I like it of all things; only, by your own showing, the pay will remain for ever in the future, it seems.'

'Go! thou hast an avaricious soul. As for thy voice, thou must have stolen it; for it has nothing in common with thee.'

'And yet I did my best tonight; did I not? Tell me the truth,' he said, with sudden earnestness; whereon Von Zbirow smiled and nodded approval.

'Ah, thou art a good boy; and I wish, O, I wish, we had a dozen of thy brothers;' and Theodore laughed, with a frank pardonable vanity.

It was growing late; the violinist and the trombone were the first to take leave, but the party did not break up all at once.

'Look at Elsa!' said Theodore.

The charmer had fallen fast asleep in her chair, her head hanging languidly on one side. She was like a China-rose metamorphosed into a girl; and as he bent over her, I heard him murmuring very softly to himself, '*Herzallerliebste mein.*' which is, being interpreted, 'my best beloved.'

'I look, I look,' said Von Zbirow, 'and when I see what I see I forgive the Mahometans for thinking that women have no

souls. Why, the aunt is nodding too, I declare.'

'Is she not lovely so?' continued Theodore enthusiastically.

'The aunt?'

'Elsa, it is quite a pity to wake her.'

For once Von Zbirow appeared to be of the same opinion on that subject.

'*Meister*,' began Theodore seriously, 'why will you not think of her for your new opera? I know she is dying to sing the part.'

'Young man,' said Von Zbirow sternly, 'thou knowest she has no qualifications, beyond a pretty face and a fresh voice; that she is too lazy to act; that she never could learn music, and has with much pains to be parrotted into her parts; that her *répertoire* is therefore very limited. She has one song, the *brindisi*, and one *rôle*, Elsa. But I cannot trust Perdita to her.'

'*Perdita!*' I repeated, planet-struck.

'She is the heroine,' explained Theodore.

'Why, then, your opera is English—the *Portent*.'

'The libretto was written in English,' said Theodore. 'Jasper Gerard gave it me. Let me see, you know him too, I think. It is by some friend of his. I see you have heard about it.'

'Was that friend yourself?' asked Von Zbirow, whose eyes all this while had been fixed on my face inquisitively.

'It was.'

Just at that moment the aunt awoke with a start and came to my relief.

'Elsa, my child,' she exclaimed, 'we are all of us mad. It is nearly midnight, and the dews are falling. Thou wilt have a cold in thy head, and so will I, and so will the Doctor. Good-night, good-night, and thanks for the feast. Doctor, will you send Justina for the *fiacre*?'

Under pretence of finding Justina he went and found the *fiacre* himself, packed the ladies in, and they drove off. The second vehicle was in readiness for us. But before we got in Von Zbirow, who for a few minutes had been engaged in earnest parley with Theodore, came forward, saying,

'Permit me to call upon you to-morrow morning at your hotel, for a most important musical affair.'

'Musical?' I repeated.

'Word of honour,' he said.

CHAPTER XXI.

NEW LIGHTS AND OLD SHADOWS.

TRUE to his word, both in the letter and the spirit, Von Zbirow appeared next morning punctually, but discreetly chaperoned by Theodore. Our distinguished visitors were ushered with some pomp into the strangers' room, where Eva and I had been breakfasting late and alone.

There was a formality about this meeting and greeting to-day which struck us as a ludicrous contrast to the freedom and spontaneous merriment of last night's frolic.

'Is it a deputation?' I asked, impressed.

'It is, it is,' said Theodore. 'Von Zbirow—you know how desperately bashful he is. I felt sure he would never get half-way through his errand, without he was backed by me.'

Bashfulness I had not yet discovered among his failings, and I waited patiently for further revelations, as the two gentlemen took their seats, with grave and official airs.

'It seems, then, Miss Noel,' re-

sumed Theodore, who seemed to have constituted himself spokesman, 'that you know all about this libretto which our friend, the Doctor here, has been induced to set. The music is now completed. I need not say that this is a masterpiece; that it is a privilege to be allowed to sing in it; that its success, when produced before the public, as it will be sooner or later, is a certain thing.'

'Then why the deuce dost thou say it all?' I heard Von Zbirow muttering *sotto voce* between his teeth.

'But, in the mean time, a scheme for giving a private performance has been set on foot by a friend of yours and the Doctor's—a Mrs. Leopold Meredith—'

'Ay, and a friend of thine,' broke in Von Zbirow, chuckling maliciously. 'She has taken him up, ladies. You know her way. She discovered him last winter at Vienna. Thou art now among her *protégés* as the flower of her flock, my Theodore; and she goes about saying to everybody, "Such an interesting youth. Magnificent voice. Do you know him? Magnificent eyes. Magnificent hair."'

'Mrs. Meredith,' continued Theodore, with a little deprecating gesture, 'is a charming woman, and is going to spend the summer at a charming castle in the heart of the country around here, belonging to her father, the Graf von Seckendorf. The husband—he is charming too, I suppose, but he lives out of doors, "for he is never happy," his wife assured me, "unless he is killing something." So the lady not unnaturally finds this charming country life a little dull.'

'Cut it short, for pity,' broke in Von Zbirow, with nervous impatience. 'In three words she want this summer to do there some what you call private theatricals—private operatics—my opera. I am asked, Theodore is asked, you will be asked. Theodore plays Rafael, and I come now for to ask you to play Perdita on the occasion of the first production of the *Portent* at Castle Adlerberg next August.'

An earthquake could not have taken me more by surprise. But there are times when one is game for earthquakes even, and startling things, once present, seem natural and welcome. Quite coolly I asked,

'What language do you play it in?'

'The original. Frau Merrydick is Anglomaniacal, as you know, and overjoyed to have caught an English tenor for the hero. Will you be heroine? She await my leave to mention it to you herself.'

'I will if I can; but can I?'

'Of course, or should I ask?' he said sardonically. 'The *rôle* is for a mezzo soprano, and not difficult. If there are any dangerous passages I will arrange them. Say, is it decided? Yes or no?'

'I accept, then. But recollect, if I fail, it will be your fault, and I shall certainly never forgive you.'

'Is it not my own opera?' he said, with a shrug. 'Trust me to risk nothing. But it will require much study; and that you may lose no time, I shall instantly send you the partition.'

'The—'

'Partition; *Anglicè*, score,' put in Theodore, laughing. 'Don't let him alarm you, Miss Noel; you have a couple of months to think about it, before we can meet to begin our rehearsals. I have engagements that keep me tied until August. Then for a holiday, mountain air, and Castle Adlerberg.'

'Do tell us more about this castle,' urged Eva. 'What kind of place may it be?'

'It stands on the top of one hill, in a secluded spot, about twenty miles from a railway station, by a right bad road,' said Von Zbirow. 'Since Fräulein von Seckendorf is married she dream of nothing but to give one grand *fête* at the Schloss. The opportunity come at last. Her father, an old man of quiet habits, is out of the way, in Carlsbad, and give up to her the Schloss for the summer. She coax her husband; the whole affair marches. There is a nice little theatre at the Schloss. I get my orchestra from the town—small, but efficient—my chorus too. There is old scenery at Graf von Seckendorf's, which shall be altered to suit. Remain the principals. I have a baritone in my eye for Antonio, who will at least do no harm; and if Frau Merrydick has a *protégé* or two to bring out, we will make of them the noble fathers. But in the main it is a duet opera. Rafael and Perdita have all the hard work to do. Frau Merrydick, you understand, leave everything for me to arrange. She has the guests to think of. The rest is my affair. Now is it agreed?'

Von Zbirow, as he spoke, grew more and more eager, excited; his face sparkling all over with a sort of phosphoric animation.

'Send me the partition,' said I gaily; and he drew it out from his capacious pocket.

'Now that matter is all nicely settled, good-morning,' said Theodore. 'I have a rehearsal at the theatre, and must not keep the divine Elsa waiting.'

'No one ever did, she takes care of that,' said Von Zbirow viciously. 'She ought sure to be first in the next world, for she comes always the last in this.'

'Ah, she is a child still, and has not learnt the value of time.'

'Nor yet how to read the clock, eh?' growled Von Zbirow, waxing fiercer and fiercer. 'Her ignorance is—is a *stunning* thing. She can read nothing—nor books, nor music—nor knows how to write.'

'Doctor, Doctor!' he remonstrated beseechingly.

'Didst thou not tell me thyself, foolish boy, one day when thou wert in a communicative mood, that the sight of the leetle letters she would send thee from time to time used to give thee such a turn, thou, from the stiff bad hand on the address, taking them, at first sight, for bills?'

The laugh was against Theodore, who reddened, but joined in it himself the next moment. He and Von Zbirow then departed, looking, as they walked off arm-in-arm, something like a modern Faust and Mephistopheles. When they were gone we were silent for a time, and I sat absently turning over the leaves of the music.

'How strange!' uttered Eva, at last.

'Passing strange,' I echoed. 'I really think there is some fatality connecting this story with me. It fascinated me unaccountably as a child, when I met with it first; it seems I am not to have done with it yet.'

But the idea, the aspiration of the enterprise, tempted me, and put me on my mettle. After what Von Zbirow had said, I might presume I had not undertaken a foolish, impossible task; and I felt a wish, and a hope behind, that I might yet astonish both him and Theodore Marston. The venture, even the first notion of it, was sufficiently exciting to rouse my best spirits, and Eva returned to Ludwigsheim with a changed being for her companion. No one from that day could tax me with idleness; and I threw

myself heart and soul into the study of Von Zbirow's music and Perdita's part.

Now I had sung ever since I could speak. Music was the one thing I had been thoroughly taught; my voice, the one gift I had been encouraged to cultivate, and cultivated accordingly. Amateur operettas had formed one of our favourite amusements at home, though no such ambitious attempt as this had ever entered my brain, except in dreams. And having accepted the position, I vowed I would spare no pains to justify Von Zbirow's confidence.

My task in return very soon possessed me. No occupation for years, if ever, had appealed to and monopolised my interest thus. I studied incessantly, seemed to breathe and live in music; studied till I knew the whole, and not my own part only, of Von Zbirow's work, by heart, so that nothing of its spirit and meaning should escape me. When, a month later, the composer paid a short visit to Ludwigsheim, and came to report progress, he professed himself very well satisfied. The Merediths also passed a week there on their way to the castle; and Sophie, with whom everything had already been arranged by letter, and who now wrote to us every day about it, came several times, just to assure herself, with her own eyes, of our well-being. She was overflowing with the pleasures of this life. The spring at Vienna had been the gayest ever known, and Francis Joseph had cut his front teeth. Lolotte was as happy as a queen, cutting bread-and-butter for Albert Grey, whose match, as Sophie had prophesied, had turned out a brilliant success. So had his new book. The opera arrangements were progressing most favourably; and the *fête* at the castle would be something to talk of for years. Leopold had had the rheumatism, but was better now, and impatient to get into the country. So we bade each other farewell, till our approaching merry meeting at Castle Adlerberg.

This new excitement, if ephemeral, was healthy while it lasted. Every day Frau Richter paid me fresh compliments on my improved appearance. I was feeling well, no doubt of that; keenly alive, eager, and elated even. As the time drew near, I one afternoon asked Eva, with a grave face, to give me her candid opinion as to my looks. An opera heroine, especially an amateur, dares not regard these things as a trifling matter.

'You are looking far better than I have ever seen you before,' she replied. 'It is not merely that you are no longer the drooping creature you seemed last summer. You have come out with quite a strange fresh life and bloom. Do you not feel the change?'

'I feel one thing so strongly that there is no room for another; determined to do or die in the *Portent*, at all events,' I replied evasively.

'You see, your interest in art is returning.'

I could not deny my keen interest in this particular opera.

'And you thought, dear,' she continued, 'that you would never care for, never take your old pleasure in, such things again. Once I feared so, too, for you. But it was only a phase, certain to pass; and see, it has passed already.'

'Do you really think so?' I said incredulously, yet half believing her; so strong was the spell of the present distraction.

'I feel sure of it.'

'By all means be it so, then.' I did my best to encourage her

and myself in the idea; nay, to make it true now, if it were not so hitherto.

It was the evening before our departure for Castle Adlerberg. At the last moment we found that one or two trifling purchases of needful things had been forgotten, and I went out a little way into the town to make them, leaving Eva engaged in packing. From Adlerberg we were to start direct on our journey homewards. It was leave-taking time. Good-bye, for ever, perhaps, to Ludwigsheim, Frau Richter, and the outdoor studio.

I may have been gone about half an hour. It was dusk when I returned. Eva was in the studio. I recollect she had not lit the candles when I entered.

She greeted me with a startled exclamation.

'Good heavens, Maisie! What on earth has happened?'

'Why, nothing, nothing,' said I, looking back at her vacantly, and laughing in an imbecile manner. But she seemed panic-struck, offered me a glass of water, sal-volatile, salts. In vain I assured her I should not faint or have hysterics, and asked again and again what all this fuss was about.

'Certainly you are not a little altered from what you were an hour ago,' said Eva, somewhat reassured. 'Have you seen a ghost?' she continued, trying to laugh; 'something surely must have given you a fright or a shock?'

I was recovering myself now. 'Well, it is nothing,' I repeated, 'or—no more than this: I went out on those commissions, as you know, bought the ribbon, the button-hook, the indigo paint, and the photograph that you wanted. There they are in that parcel. Then, I was just turning the corner of the street opposite the monster hotel, when—not very thrilling so far, is it?'

'Well?'

'When I saw an open carriage loaded with luggage standing before the door, and a lady inside—Hilda. That was my ghost, Eva;' and I laughed aloud.

'Maisie, you frighten me,' she remonstrated; and I said no more. But Eva had grown grave and sad.

'Was he there?' she asked, at last.

'No doubt. I think he had gone inside to speak to the hotel people. But I did not see him. I did not wait to. I wanted to get home. I thought I had seen enough for one day.'

Evidently Eva thought so too, as she watched me in silence.

'So that was all,' I concluded. 'Eva, Eva, the world is so wide. Can it not keep us apart?'

'It may yet—I hope it will.'

'Don't think me weaker than I am,' I urged; 'if they had seen me, accosted me, I feel and I know I could have acted my part. But I am glad, ever so glad, that we are leaving to-morrow. How far is Adlerberg from Ludwigsheim? Say a hundred miles. I shall like to feel they are between us.'

That one glimpse had brought everything back. I could not sleep that night. I felt as if I could not breathe in the same atmosphere as they. I fought against the curious, distorted figures that haunted my dreams, waking dreams for the most part, but it seemed as if the darkness, whose children they were, would never go. No respite for me until the sun rose. Then, whilst Ludwigsheim, its shops and hotels, were still silent, and asleep, we drove through the streets to the station.

So much for the triumph of time.

(*To be continued.*)

THE ROMANCE OF OLD LONDON.

No. IV. KING OLAF'S VICTORY: LONDON BRIDGE, 1066.

FLAGSTAFF, clock, and tower so square*
(Olaf the King was a mighty man);
Lantern-spire, so light and fair;†
Tell us, O steeples, the names you bear!
(Olaf and Magnus the river span).‡

Olaf and Magnus, father and son
(Olaf the King was a valiant man).
Magnus lived as his father had done;
Many a battle they fought and they won
(Olaf and Magnus the river span).

Olaf the Strong and Magnus the Good
(Olaf the King was a mighty man),
Tell us, how long have you guarding stood,
Guarding the bridge in your hardihood
(Olaf and Magnus the river span)?

Now look ye away, now look ye away
(Olaf the King was a Northern man),—
Now look ye away to the ages gray,
To the Sagas of Iceland and Norroway
(Olaf and Magnus the river span).

Snorro the Skald of the Norsemen sings
(Olaf the King was a mighty man),—
Sings of the deeds of the bold Vikings,
Of the brine of the sea and the brawls of the Things§
(Olaf and Magnus the river span).

Olaf the King he had yellow hair;
Thick-set and strong was that mighty man;
Broad was his face and honest, and fair
As rose upon snow; and no man might dare
Withstand the bright rage of his blue eyes' glare
(Olaf and Magnus the river span).

* St. Olave's, Tooley-street (Surrey side).
† St. Magnus', Fish-street-hill (City side).
‡ Olaf was canonised soon after his death, on account of his zeal in the conversion of his heathen subjects. Magnus, who to his father's claims for reverence added his own fame as the national law-giver, was never canonised, but was honoured through his patron-saint. The Abbots of Bermondsey, alternately with those of Westminster, held the gift of the living; and, as we know that Olaf was a great favourite in Bermondsey, it is not wonderful that the worthy abbots called the church on the opposite bank after Olaf's son.
§ Things: the assemblies of the freemen.

Svein the Dane was the Norseman's foe
(Olaf the King was a mighty man)—
Svein the Dane had laid England low;
And the country was wasted with bitter woe
(Olaf and Magnus the river span).

The Danes lay encamp'd in London the strong
(Olaf the King was a mighty man),
With ditches and ramparts so broad and so long;
And they fought and they revell'd with battle and song
(Olaf and Magnus the river span).

'Now haste ye and help us!' King Ethelred cried;
'Haste ye and help us, O mighty man!
For Svein, our foeman, but now hath died.
Haste ye, and yet we may turn the tide'
(Olaf and Magnus the river span).

Up the river of Thames King Olaf he sail'd
(Faithful ally was the mighty man).
By land the Danes in the City prevail'd;
Foil'd were the Saxons, their bravery fail'd
(Olaf and Magnus the river span).

The wooden bridge of the City was low,
Brawny-arm'd Danes each rampart mann'd;
Crowding together in taunting row,
Each one a boulder of stone could throw
From the wooden bridge that the river spann'd.

The Saxons they turn'd and fled in despair;
Dyke and defence by the Danes were mann'd—
Danes who with curses rent the air,
With ribald shouts and blaspheming prayer,
From the wooden bridge that the river spann'd.

'Hearest thou not, O Olaf the Strong?'
Ethelred cried, that unready man;
'Carest thou not that the battle goes wrong?
Or art thou grown deaf to the heathenish throng
On the ramparts and bridge that the river span?'

'Hatchet and axe, and cable and cord!'
Cried Olaf the King, that quick-witted man;
'Hatchet and axe—not arrow and sword—
Shall win the day, by the help of the Lord,
Though demons and Danes should the river span!

Down with each house by the river side'
(Olaf the King was a subtle man)!
'Of walls and planks, well season'd and dried,
Scaffolds we'll make; for our ships must ride
Right under the bridge at the turn of the tide,
And the Sea-King's fleet shall the river span.

For Olaf the King he knows not of loss;
Well can he trust in each northern man,
Who has learn'd to fight by the waves that toss
Up the Sunds and the Fiords! By the Holy Cross,
Row up to the arches the Thames that span.'

Slowly and heavily off from the shore,
Facing the tide pulls each northern man;
With scaffold strong over aft and fore,
Over deck and prow and men at the oar,
The Sea-King's ships the river span.

Arrows and stones fall thicker than hail.
'Cable and cord!' cries the subtle man;
'The ships are sinking; 'tis death if we quail!
The saints are with us; so can we not fail!
Cable and cord shall the river span.'

Right under the bridge King Olaf rows.
'Come, life! Come, death!' shouts the mighty man.
Strong to the sea the current flows.
'Perish, O bridge, with our heathen foes!
Cable and cord your arches span!

Cable and cord round the wooden piers!
Pull, pull for dear life!' cries the valiant man.
'The river is with us; away with your fears!
Pull hard with the stream, and mock with your cheers
Demons and Danes who the river span.'

With a ringing shout the Norsemen row
(Bright gleam the eyes of the mighty man).
By cable and cord the arches low
Are tightly bound to each vessel's prow.
How long may the bridge the river span?

Cable and cord may strain and creak:
'Now row ye well!' shouts the mighty man.
The tide is with them; the piers are weak;
With a crash they splinter; a yell and a shriek—
Drowning and death the river span.

Down comes the bridge with its crowd of Danes;
Away with its piers rows the subtle man.
The Saxon King and the Saxon Thanes
Slaughter and slay till the daylight wanes—
Shouting and shrieks the river span.

So was there a victory gotten that day.
(Olaf the King was a mighty man),
Of which one may read in the pages gray
Of the Sagas of Iceland and Norroway
(Olaf and Magnus the river span).

L. ALLDRIDGE.

LANDS [illegible] LAYS.

No. [illegible]

[illegible]

LANDSCAPE MEMORIES.

No. I. A ROAD NEAR BANNALEC (FINISTÈRE).

The leaves hang over the woodland way,
The broad leaves of the oak,
So thick, that scarce a wandering ray
May pierce the verdant cloak,
That keeps the grass as fresh and cool
As margin of some silent pool.

The weary sun is sinking fast
To bathe in western seas;
Trees are telling of sorrow past
To the new-born evening breeze;
Faint comes a distant village chime
That tells the soul 'tis vesper time.

Adown the shady forest road
The brown cows lowing go;
No need for her to wield her goad
Who follows, singing low,
Half-dreaming of her wedding-day,
Half-hearing fancied rebecks play.

A sudden light as from summer sky,
A sudden hush of her tune,
As the youth appears, all suddenly,
Who kiss'd her lips in June—
The brown cows meekly stay and gaze
As they kiss again in the woodland ways.

June hath promise of coming bliss,
July brings forth fulfilling;
A hint of summer was in the kiss
That told the maid was willing:
But summer itself shall be the tide
That plaits the rose-wreath for the bride.

B. MONTGOMERIE RANKING.

'FOR SALE—A THOROUGHBRED NAG, UNBROKEN.'

I.

The nag was a mare. Father bought her of a sharp horsey innkeeper in the neighbouring town, who had had her of a man who had taken her in payment of a bad debt of Captain Pumpkin, bankrupt. When she was brought home, with her foal of three weeks trotting by her side, we all gathered round with the warmest interest. Nobody could enough admire the beauty of the pair. What a graceful deer-like creature was the foal! How clean and elegant were the limbs of the

'Rising four-year-old, Joe,' said my father.

'Umph!' grunted Joe.

He stepped back, and ran his eye all over her for a moment, as if for something he had lost; then, again stepping forward, he bent down and lifted her forefoot to tap the frog. With a mischievous flash of the eye she turned her head, and seized in her teeth the most obtrusive part of Joe's gar-ment. Joe dropped on his hands. We all laughed; how could we help it? Joe rose in some perplexity, and turned to me quietly with '*She* ain't no good—

'She looks very handsome.'

Then the gentleman rushed at her, hooting and rattling his stick in his hat to make her show off her paces. Away she went at a tremendous trot round the field, with her tail cocked high and her foal galloping by her side.

'She steps well,' said he, coming back to my father. 'A little wide behind; but all the better for that—shows speed. That's a very pretty creature of a foal, though, as swift and graceful as a fawn. Where did you pick 'em up?'

Then my father related all about the purchase, I suppose; for I did not hear, being outside the fence, and father not having so loud a tongue as his friend.

'O, *I* know her,' cried his friend; 'she used to belong to Captain Pumpkin.'

Father nodded.

'By all accounts, then,' said his friend, shaking his head, 'that *I* have heard—mind you, that *I* have heard, for I don't swear to their absolute truth—*she's a horrid vixen!*'

My curiosity had by this time carried me through the fence.

'How can they tell?' asked my father, with the least touch of impatience in his voice.

The fact is, from various dark hints that had been hovering around him for some days, the suspicion was beginning closely to press him that he had not made so keen, so prudent a purchase after all.

'How can they tell, when she's never been tried?'

'Tried, Mr. Turnham? Lor' bless you! she's been tried—if she's the mare—and gone over two trainers, Davenwick and Mossfoot; and if she's the same, she has a bit out of one ear, as if nibbled by a rat, and she has a fore-pastern fired.'

So saying he approached the mare again.

'Woa, lass; woa, little wifie.'

With a toss of her head and a scornful glance of her eye she dashed off, but not before we had observed the marks on the pastern of the near forefoot—an appearance of tightness, with rebellious little ridges of hair running from top to bottom, about an inch or so apart.

I remarked to my father that I had observed these marks from the first, but had not understood them.

'Hadn't you better, James,' said he, turning on me, 'go and feed that dog? He's been howling for at least half an hour.'

Thus civilly he ordered me off; and I went.

I was out riding the rest of the morning. When I returned I heard from Joe, while he was hissing over the hot flanks of my horse, that my father had sent the pretty mare with her foal off to a distant field.

''E 'ad 'er in fust, though,' said Joe, with a wink.

'Well,' said I eagerly, 'and did you see the—the—mutilated ear, and the fired pastern?'

'Bless you, Master James,' said Joe, stopping and looking up, 'I seen 'em afore.'

'Seen them before, and never mentioned it, Joe?'

'Mention it, *Mister* James, d'ye say? Now you knows better'n that. You knows 'ow master, your father, does. 'E won't a 'ear uv 'es bein' tuk in from nobody; *but* when 'e *sees* 'e is tuk in, away 'e packs the thing wot tuk 'im in out uv sight somewheres, which 'e's done this blessed day.'

And Joe with a chuckle resumed his hissing and thumping.

'Joe,' I said, after having considered a moment whether I should reveal my ignorance, 'what do they fire a pastern for?'

'Fire a pastern for, Mister James?'

He rose slowly, and began absently to feel for the horse's ribs.

''Cos it's cruel, Mister James; 'cos the 'oss 'as smashed 'isself some time or nuther, an' it's swelled big, an' they lays somethink over it an' lays the iron on 'issin' 'ot—*that* precious soon lays the swellin'. *That's* wot they does it for, Mister James, 'cos they thinks the 'oss likes it, I dessay.'

At lunch says father to me, 'I don't see, James, what's to hinder you from training that mare.'

'No more do I, father,' I answered, after a moment of surprise. 'I don't see why she shouldn't be managed. I'll sit her if she don't lie down and roll with me; and if she does, I can stand over her till she gets up again.'

My father looked at me steadily, and demanded,

'Who said she laid down and rolled?'

I looked foolish, and replied that I had heard no one say that —only—

'Only,' repeated my father, waxing warm, getting as nearly angry as I ever saw him get, 'that's how a poor brute's character, like many a man's, is whispered and winked and nodded and hummed and hawed away, before— Take and try her.'

I was overwhelmed with the unusual volume and warmth of my father's speech. I felt hurt, too; but I promised to do my best and gentlest with the mare. But here my mother interposed. The whispers defamatory of the mare that had got abroad had crept insidiously into her busy household ears, and she now, in some anxiety for the life and limb of her first-born, hinted that it might be better to let an experienced horse-breaker have her first.

'That's just the fault I have to find with these men, my dear,' said my father, 'that they are horse-*breakers*. If an animal shows any will or spirit of its own, they have no thought of trying to bend it—they must break it. If they can't, the horse is a vixen—full of vice—they can do nothing with her. She passes from their hands —or rather from their fists and whips and feet, and the sound of their coarse voices—with a mortal dread upon her of any human being, so that it will be difficult, very difficult, for any one to do anything with her, except'—and he gave me a straight kind look (as a peace-offering, I suppose, for the sin of his warm words)—'with the most patient and thoughtful treatment, which I hope—I think James will give her.'

Such words from my father, who seldom spoke either in praise or blame, sounded to me the rarest flattery. I blushed, and resolved to do my best.

However, I found that in private my mother had prevailed upon my father to let the mare remain unhandled till the harvest was past, by which time, perhaps, her high fierce spirit (if she had it) might have sunk to a very tame ebb on an exclusive grass diet.

III.

In the mean time fresh evidence of the depravity and wide reputation of the mare kept coming to light in a most sprightly irritating fashion. One market-day, for instance, while I was looking on at the sale of some store-pigs, I became conscious that a man, who looked like a respectable groom or coachman, was fidgeting about and eyeing me as if he longed very much to speak, but could

not find enough assurance either in his pockets or within his ample waistcoat. Feeling for the man, and seeing no harm in him, I made up to him with some remark about the pigs, with which he agreed. He very soon took occasion to ask if we hadn't that mare up at our place.

'I don't know,' said I; 'we have several mares;' though I was quite sure which he meant.

Yes, yes; but it was that vicious thoroughbred that had belonged to Captain Pumpkin; that was the one he was a-speakin' of.

'O, *you* know her too, do you?' I said.

'Know her? Bless ye, know 'er as well 's I know my own mother! Warn't it me as saw 'er grow up a colt, an' as fust tuk 'er in? You know that mark on 'er ear? she's got a big ear an' a ugly cartey 'ead, too big for 'er blood. Well, that 'appened when she was fust tuk in, an' was just a-bein' bound wi' the 'alter in the stall, when up she rises on 'er 'ind legs, playin' this yere in the air, a-sparrin'-like; up she rises an' strikes 'er 'ead agin a beam, an' cuts 'er ear clean off; 'twas just 'a-'angin' by a rag o' skin. So off I goes for the vet, an' when 'e come we casts 'er, an' 'e sews it on. Ye'll see the marks of the stitches yet, sir, if ye look. Fired in the pastern? I don't know nothin' about that, sir. Very like that was done by one o' them trainers. She went over two on 'em, you know, sir.'

I hinted an opinion that they had not understood, and had bungled her, and that I meant to try her myself.

He looked me up and down in surprise, till I blushed.

'Excuse me, sir, but hes your family insured your life? You'll excuse me, you know, sir,' said he, advancing nearer, 'but she's a spoiled brute. She ain't good for nothink. Kind gentle treatment, sir, do you say? Well, that's just where it is. *If* she 'ad, sir, or if she 'ad 'ad, as you may say. But, ye see, she's been 'ashed an' knocked about by them fellers, she 'avin' a devil uv a temper uv her own to begin with. Well, ye see, they've come off second best, as the sayin' is, an' she knows it. It's too late, sir; she's got off too long with it.'

'Why, how old is she?'

'How old, sir? Let me—' ('scratch my beard,' he might have said, for that was what he did)—'she was dropped, sir, the year Blenkiron won the Derby; she's gettin' on for six, sir. Well, sir, you *may*, after a while, manage to ride her, but—'

The ellipsis of speech was made fully explicit by a portentous nod.

On our way home from market I retailed to father what I had been told. 'And,' I concluded, 'he said we *might* get her to be ridden, but as for harness—'

'You see, James,' said my father, 'these men have so mismanaged her, that our work will be more difficult than if they had never seen her.'

'Yes; that's just what *he* said.'

'Who said?' asked my father, looking at me keenly.

I felt the rebuke to the full; he needn't have said another word; though he did add, after I stammered in reply, 'The—the man—'

'Do you usually accept as gospel all the gossip you may pick up from this and that creature you know nothing of?'

I was nettled. 'But surely, father, in this case—this gossip—there is a probability—'

He saw I wished to entangle him in an argument.

'Now, James,' said he.

The tone and the gaze subdued me. I was dumb.

It will thus be seen that my father still believed that the mare, notwithstanding the many serious rents and holes in her credit, had something of a character to lose; and he was resolved that, if she could not be rehabilitated with a new one, no one should be encouraged by him to spy and point out other blemishes in the old—not even his son. He seemed determined to stick by her to the last.

IV.

I SAY *seemed* now; but who then would ever have dreamt of reading at Michaelmas in a catalogue of a neighbour's sale the following entry by my father?—'*A Thoroughbred Nag, four years, with Foal; unbroken.*' I was astonished, for I had overheard not the faintest whisper of an intention to sell her. I could not help showing my astonished face to my father. He turned away, explaining the entry by—

'Your mother's afraid of you with her' (meaning the mare).

I submitted to be thus saddled with the blame as gracefully as I could.

But there was no such luck as to be rid of her so easily. She was as well known among the gentlemen with the knowing little tufts and the tight trousers—ay, and among the farmers too—as any lady who has been defamed is when she ventures into society: she was infamously well known. And she stood in the yard, with her innocent little son, quiet and placable, as meek as milk. It was no doubt to her a matter of indifference who possessed her, if she was left undisturbed in the enjoyment of her small maternal cares, and of the sweetest of grass and other provender.

And, of course, in a little while every mortal man and boy knew her bad points and her vices off by heart. If one man did not know quite all, others (who had never spoken to the man in their lives before) strove for the pleasure of pouring into his ear their gratuitous information. The deuce! it made me quite wroth. Two men were talking her over quite openly. Some little distance off another man was eyeing her with the dubious balanced look of a possible bidder, when suddenly he overheard from the others a derisive, 'Unbroken! Ha, ha! Why, she,' &c. They were turning away, when the man in alarm sidled up to them. Did he just—did they know anything of that mare with the foal? Did they? They hoped they did! Ha, ha! I grew more and more angry. Why could they not give the poor brute a chance for her—sale? One of them was arrested in the full flow of imparting all he knew by chancing to cast his eye over his shoulder and observe me. 'Sh!' said he, 'his son!' 'Where?' asked the stranger; and when he knew, he stared at me as if I were a pestilent swindler, till I turned away red with rage and confusion.

But when the old gentleman in green spectacles and white gaiters asked the boy who was standing with the mare whether she went quietly when ridden, and the boy replied, 'O, bless you, yes, sir; why, I rode uv 'er over 'ere myself this morning, an' she went as quiet as a lamb,' I chuckled with delight, though I knew that boy would not dare to lift a leg towards her. I, at least, did not register the lie against the boy, it was told in so good a cause.

But the worst was yet to come.

Her turn came, and she was trotted out before the auctioneer.

'Now, gentlemen,' &c.

'How old is she?' demanded an oldish nondescript fellow in a wide-awake hat and a blouse, who was reputed to possess the fastest trotter in the district.

'Four year old, gentlemen; and quite unbroken,' said the auctioneer, consulting his catalogue.

'Now, gentlemen, what's—'

'It's a lie!' shouted the old fellow. 'She's six, if she's not seven; an' as for her being unbroken—'

But here a sense of fairness and of privilege stirred the breasts of many, who interrupted him with,

'A bid! A bid!'

'Ten pounds!' shouted he.

'Ten pounds, gentlemen. Ten pounds is bid for this thoroughbred mare with foal—'

'Who is the foal by?' asked a voice from the crowd.

'Cavalier,' whispered my father from behind the auctioneer.

'By Cavalier, gentlemen,' shouted the auctioneer.

'It's a lie,' muttered the old fellow.

'Mr. Cross, gentlemen' (that was the old fellow's name), 'is cross because she is not a *cross*.'

Here there was a loud bucolic laugh from the crowd.

'No, gentlemen, she's no cross, she's thoroughbred. There's blood, gentlemen. Trot her out again, Tom.'

Bill cracked his whip, and shouted, and Tom trotted her out, but with little enthusiasm. The bucolic audience laughed, wagged its head, and winked.

'Well, gentlemen, what do you say? Mr. Cross, let me start with twenty.' Mr. Cross shook his sulky head. 'No! Have a catalogue, Mr. Cross?'

'I don't want a catalogue,' said Mr. Cross.

'No, gentlemen, but Mr. Cross wants a thoroughbred mare, with foal, for 10*l*., gentlemen—a nag that could win 'im a trotting-match. Out with her again, Tom! There, gentlemen, what action and spring! She'd do a trotting-match for you every day in the year, Cross—Sundays excepted. On Sundays, gentlemen, Mr. Cross is too good a man to run matches.'

But it was of no use; he might fire off the most pointed wit he could invent, no higher bid would be thrown to him in return: the crowd grinned and giggled, or stood silent and suspicious. Mr. Auctioneer turned and whispered to my father, and the mare was walked off covered with ignominy.

As we drove home, I ventured a remark, amongst others, upon the unseasonable interference of the old idiot in the blouse.

'I'm pleased she's going to stay with us,' said my father curtly, and gave the horse a cut with the whip.

I could not make my father out; I was silent.

V.

It was November, and the height of the shooting-season, when father reminded me that an attempt must be made to train that mare; had we not better begin at once? I agreed that we had. It was always great trouble to take and halter it. But, for the most part, once in a corner she submitted to be led off quietly.

We tried the saddle on her, just to see how she would wear it; for nothing serious could be attempted till that precious baby of hers should have been weaned. She submitted to the saddle as if she had been under it all her days. She seemed so quiet, I thought I

might try how she would endure one seated in the saddle. It was a safe enough venture for me, for there were two or three men about who had helped in her capture, and father was at her head. I did not like the glance of her eye as I placed my foot. I sprang into the saddle and stuck, prepared for the worst. But she could not have stood more quietly if she had been made of wood. I walked her up the lane, with her foal trotting by her side, or behind, or in front, and I walked her down again. I walked her about the green, and tried to excite her to a merry prance or two, but no—she was as sober as an old cart-horse. I will confess I felt rather disappointed that she had shown not a spark of the wild devilry that was said to be in her. I got off in disgust. Then I thought I would try a remount alone, she seemed so meek a brute. I had no sooner reached the saddle than she kicked up like a donkey, and trotted off with her beautiful springy step, trying to rub me off against hay-ricks and stable-walls and fence-posts. 'Well,' thought I, 'this is more promising,' and dismounted the first opportunity.

I shall not trouble you with a detailed account of the weaning of that blessed baby: how he was penned into a large stall adjoining that in which his mother was bound, with a great deal of litter strewed deep about the floor and piled high against the wall; how he screamed and neighed (never have I heard so deep, so fierce a neigh as mother and son both possessed); how to escape his pursuers he leapt up among the piled litter to climb over to his dam—and would have climbed, and broken limb or neck, had I not fortunately been in his rear and seized his tail, and hauled till he rolled over in the litter, and was lost for the moment, all except his thin legs, which fought desperately with the air; how, when taken and securely haltered, he danced and pranced about the green, threw himself down and screamed, once twisting me over with him; how, after he had worked himself into the last state of perspiration and excitement, he leant—absolutely leant—up against me to rest, poor little fellow! He was at length, though nothing like cowed, led away to a distant part of the farm, and introduced to the company of other colts who had lately passed through the same bewildering experience as himself and had survived it, and who now knew no more of mother or father than does an Arab of the streets. He raced about and screamed for his mother, to the no small surprise and contempt of his comrades.

Parted from her first-born son, that mother led us such a life! If ever there was a real nightmare of flesh and blood, it was she. Three, four nights running, father, Joe, and I sat up with her (all three the first night, the other nights by turns), and if we had not she would have hanged herself over and over again. A very legion of devils seemed to possess her. She neither ate nor drank, nor lay down day or night, but made violent wrenches at her halter (which she broke again and again), threw herself against the walls and on the floor of her stall, like a lunatic. I never saw or heard of a horse behaving so before.

'Lor' bless you, yes, sir,' said Joe, raising his eyebrows, 'at weanin' wuss—much wuss, sometimes.'

Well, I never had seen it; but I was young, and I ventured to doubt whether the mare would not rather die than give in, and whether we were not acting a very cruel part. In expressing as much, I

looked at my father; but he stood and smoked, fixed and inscrutable as an Indian chief. Her last paroxysm must have been very violent and peculiar. I was with her on the fourth day alone, and had run indoors to my mother to get a mouthful of something warm, when suddenly there came from the stable the most dreadful clatter and snorting. I rushed out, and found her lying with her tail where her head should be, but with her head still bound to the manger, so that it was dragged over her shoulder towards her tail in a most constrained position; she had one hind-leg over the halter. I saw I could do nothing for her—she must lie there till she could burst herself free. She made a few ineffectual dashes, kicks, and snorts; then, with swelling ribs and a tremendous snort, she put out her strength. The leather snapped beneath her chin, and she stood with all her feet out apart (as if she meant to fly), and looked about her. Then, with a big sigh, she lay down and was quiet.

VI.

Soon after this, it was possible to begin the work of breaking in. For two or three nights after the weaning and watching my sleep was over-ridden by that mare. In wakeful intervals I endeavoured to mature my green opinions on the best mode of training. I convinced myself by certain links of reasoning, which I lost in my sleep, that the too common whack and halloo—'crack whip and dash away'—method (if method it were) would never do with a creature of her high mettle. I would use her gently. I recalled the saying of an old gentleman, who had been much in the society of horses, that he had often struck a horse, but had never known the blow do any good, and I resolved that under no provocation would I strike her. I sleepily argued with myself that the doctrine of original sin was inapplicable to horses: there was no such thing as inborn vice among them; what seemed such was only either youthful mischief, or ignorance, or, at the very worst, fear.

One evening, in the absence of my father, I flaunted forth these revolutionary notions before a sympathetic but unpractical female audience, consisting of my mother, Sissy, the village schoolmistress (an old maid of prodigious learning and vast powers of utterance), and the old retriever dog. The ladies applauded my humane opinions; the old dog barked and howled as if in dissent and lamentation. Then the lady of prodigious lore, with a delicious roll in her voice, asked Mister James if he had never heard how it was that man was at all able to restrain and dominate so noble and fiery an animal as the horse.

Well, I replied, casting about in my mind, perhaps I had.

That Nature, in her beneficent wisdom, had so constructed the lens of the horse's eye that a man appeared to him of gigantic size, huge and towering?

'Dear me!' said I, 'I never heard that before!'

'Have you not?' said she. 'It's one of the many marvellous facts science has demonstrated to us. If it were not for that, a small boy like Billy there' (Billy tried to look unconscious, and pulled up his stockings) 'would never be able to lead about a horse and manage him.'

'Indeed!' I exclaimed.

Here Billy interposed the irrelevant fact that he had ridden the old gray mare to water and back again, and all alone too.

'No; not quite alone, Billy,' suggested Sissy.

'Well,' quoth Billy, rather sulkily, 'there was only Joe besides;' who, no doubt, was a considerable figure of authority to the gray mare, if not to Billy.

It occurred to me afterwards—keen objections or smart answers never do occur to me till the occasion for their application has slipped past—that if the lens of the horse's eye had this enlarging power, then everything he saw through that lens—not men and little boys alone—must be of monstrous size! Why does a horse, then, not run away when he sees a fellow-horse? Ha, ha! He does shy, though, when he sees a dark bush in the twilight. Can it be that he imagines it a great tree?

However, I resolved to be as big and important in the eyes of that mare as her lens would possibly allow. But in a day or two, I must confess, I lost in dignity and self-respect. The mare had run with open mouth at that boy who had lied so well on her behalf. Possibly some moral lens she kept somewhere had a more than nullifying effect upon her physical, and had shown her him as a very small boy indeed, as a mere worm of a boy. She struck him down with her fore-feet as soon as he entered her box, and she would have trampled him to death had he not contrived to creep away, very sore, under the manger, where he lay beneath her watchful eye till I entered, and found and released him. I tied her up and began to groom her (I had begun thus to make myself intimately acquainted with her temper, and with all her little ways)—I say, I began to groom her. She was rather dirty about the hocks, and I suppose I must have scratched her a little in applying the currycomb there. She struck out a fierce high kick, which just missed me. I instantly dug her in the ribs with the comb. I at once regretted it. She plunged about a little; and I saw from her evil eye and flattened ears she had taken it in great dudgeon. I had lost whatever slight hold I had got of her equine affections; but the worst was, I had broken my resolution at the first trial.

VII.

To-morrow was the day when she was to have her first '*plunge*,' as Joe phrased it, and my mother's anxiety visibly deepened.

Why could we not, she urged my father, let her plunge about for a few days with a man-of-straw or a sand-man on her back? She had seen that done at home.

'With a good result?' asked my father.

My mother did not know with what result; but she thought we might try it.

I suggested as a compromise that she might wear a man-of-straw in the night; but my father at once put that aside by reminding me that the mare lay down in the night now, and that if she found she could lie down comfortably with the man-of-straw—(here my father could not refrain from laughter—whatever at, my mother wondered?)—she would try and lie down with me.

'No, my dear,' said he; 'we must try her with this man-of-straw first,' looking at me and laughing. My father was unusually facetious.

When I was mounted for the '*plunge*'—

'Always a short stirrup,' said my father emphatically, 'when you're on a horse you're not sure of.'

While he on the one side and

Joe on the other were shortening the leathers, the mare kept treading and treading (as if she had been in the army and had learnt to mark time), cocking and switching her long switch-tail, till she almost whisked old Joe's withered head off.

'Woa!' cried Jack, 'you—;' he felt my father's calm eye on him, and said, 'you bonny Bess!'

'We must cut it off,' said my father.

He meant the mare's tail, not Joe's old head.

But before my father's sharp knife was produced, and while he was still smiling at Joe's mishap, round came the terrible tail on his side and whisked his hat away; some of its loose longer hairs even reached and stung my nose. I believe she knew well what she was about; I could detect the ardent mischief in her eye and the backward prick of her ear. But we soon had her tail abridged to some inches above her hocks.

She trod and trod in her easy springy style, catching at and chewing her bit (it was a simple champ-bit with keys), but she would not step an inch forward in obedience to my mild requests and entreaties. My father, at length out of patience, gave her a smack on the shoulder with the end of the rein he held, and away she dashed. But she found in a little that, what with me on her back and father and Joe with a rein on either side, there was little room for the play of her own free will.

She submitted sullenly: sullenness and design were always expressed to me by her Jewish cast of nose and long narrow forehead. There are no points so attractive in a horse as an open frank nostril and a broad forehead.

'I don't like that head of hers,' said I to Joe; 'I can't think she's thoroughbred.'

'Thoroughbred? Lor' bless you, Mister James, ye've jest got to twig that cartey 'ead to know that; though it wouldn't do,' added he in an undertone, 'to say that to master. No.'

I went to feed her (I always fed her myself). I mixed in a sieve a quantity of chaff and bran, with a sprinkling of salt and two or three handfuls of oats, for we thought that full measure of hard food might make her like Jeshurun. She observed my movements over her shoulder in sullen expectancy. I put it in her manger. She sniffed at it, tasted it, tossed as much as she could out with her nose, and then turned and glowered at me; till, with a sound more like a pig's grunt or a testy man's 'humph!' than an honest equine snort, she returned to her manger and began eating.

'There,' cried Joe, wagging his head at me, 'not she! O, no! Don't you make no mistake!'

After these oracular words from Joe, I resumed,

'I'm sure she and I will never be good friends. She looks so secret, so crafty and designing, there can never be any confidence between us.'

'Ah!' said Joe, looking puzzled.

'I shall never be able to trust that Jew nose.'

Joe laughed, and kept repeating to himself, 'Jew nose,' as if it were a very rich joke.

We plunged and trained her in the soft field the next day, and the third day, and the fourth, and the fifth; and my father said every day with increasing confidence as the days passed, 'I don't see anything about that mare that should make folks say she plays such tricks. She's as docile and good a thing as can be.' I was silent.

At the end of the week she seemed so submissive and tractable that my father thought she and I might very well be trusted alone. I, however, still distrusted the sullen craft of her eye; and that Jew nose, I said to myself, I could never be reconciled to. I saddled and bridled her, with the least tremor of anxiety disturbing me. I was going, for security's sake, to put a curb-bit in her mouth; but father said, 'O, fie, no; you'll spoil her mouth.' So I allowed her the usual champ-bit. She grabbed at it when it was presented to her mouth, as if she understood how near she had been to losing it. I led her out; Joe came forward to hold her head.

'Let him mount by himself,' said my father. 'She must learn to stand without being held.'

She stepped round and round in a staid funereal style, as if performing at a circus. At length I got into the saddle, and, quick as thought, she bolted with me, past Joe, back into the stable. I had just time to think of Absalom's fate before I leant far back over her tail and passed under the low lintel of the door. I was much nettled, but I restrained myself. I got off and led her out again in silence, exchanging with the brute a glance of defiance. She wanted to go through the circus performance again. My blood was rising; I shut my lips and was resolute. I held the rein, but made no effort to mount, till she stopped and looked at Joe, and from Joe to me, as much as to say, 'What does this mean?' Whilst she was considering this, I leaped to the saddle, and away she went, as on the first day I bestrode her, to scrape me off against a fence. Failing in this, she darted forward a few yards into the road, stopped dead, and kicked clear up like a donkey.

'Grip hold o' the saddle be'ind,' cried Joe.

Again was she disappointed. She whisked her tail smartly and dashed away up the lane, as if possessed by all the devils that drove the herd of swine to commit suicide. I pulled my very hardest to rein her in; but the champ-bit could restrain her no more than a rotten stick. 'Well, my pet,' said I aloud, 'go as hard as you can pelt, but I'll stick to you.' Forthwith she began to prance and rear. A gate by chance stood open, and before she was aware I had touched her with my heel and she was in the ploughed field. After plunging and rearing for some time, till I thought the next moment she would fall backward and crush me beneath her, she played what I had been led to understand was her great trump-card—she lay down and rolled. But her feet were clogged with the soft loam, and the action was not so quick but that I had time to get my foot free from the stirrup. I stood over her, as I had promised myself I would. She glared back at me in surprise. She planted out her forefeet, preparing to rise. I was ready; remembering Joe's last words, I grasped the saddle behind me. It was well I did, for with the jerk with which she rose she almost jerked me over her head. She seemed to have expected thus to get rid of me. She looked round and stood still a moment to consider what she would do next. 'Do what I want you to do,' said I, then touched her with my heel, and guided her across the field. She stepped along steadily enough till she reached the farther side. I had begun in my triumph to despise the clumsiness and fewness of her tricks, and to laugh at myself for having looked forward to her

playing of them with such anxiety, when she espied under a wide-spreading oak a breach in the wattle-fence between the field and the road, and dashed straight at it, will I, nill I. Again I thought of Absalom, this time with more propriety. Before I could count six we had passed under the tree; a crooked finger of one of its great arms had snatched my hat—luckily leaving me my head—we were down the steep bank, and tearing along the road as hard as she could gallop.

'This is nice,' thought I, 'very nice.' I must confess I thought bitterly of my father. He had allowed me to be carried off by this brute; he would now be sitting down quietly to lunch at home; but I would lunch at—*where?* The road was straight and firm, and her feet covered mile after mile; while I, hot, tired, and hatless, resigned myself to a Gilpin ride. Ten good miles, through sun and shade, without the interruption of a single turnpike. Up Sharpthorne Hill she slackened pace a little, and I got her danced down the long street of the village of Cripley and into the George yard, twelve miles from home. I shouted eagerly for the ostler, for she seemed inclined to return to the road. A little bow-legged man appeared.

'Had a stiff run, sir?' said he, as he stood at her head and glanced at her lathered shoulders.

'Rather,' said I. I swung myself off, and walked away to find the inn-parlour.

I lunched off the remains of a leg of mutton the innkeeper's family had had for dinner. I rested a little, and then, in a hat borrowed of the landlord, walked out to the stables to look at the brute. The little ostler had scraped her down and thrown a cloth over her, and she was munching some fragrant hay as if nothing had happened.

'Come from Captain Pumpkin's, sir?' asked the ostler.

I shook my head and looked at him; I guessed what was coming.

'Not?' said he. 'I thought this yere mare was his.'

'Yes, it was,' I replied; 'but my father bought it.'

'Ah!' said he, with a look which added plainly, 'What a green fellow your father must be' He added aloud, 'P'raps 'e got 'er cheap?'

'I can't say,' said I.

'Well,' said he, 'I thought I knowed 'er. If ye once clap eyes on 'er, you'll easy know 'er agin, you know, sir,' he continued, with a hoarse laugh; 'this yere ear, and the fired pastern. Woa, tit!'

'Ye-es,' said I, in a tone of dolour, and related to him some of our adventures.

'Ah,' laughed he, getting quite lively, 'she *is* a bad un, ain't she? She's the tippest-topper at badness ever I see. So sly, too. Lor' bless you, sir!'

He seemed about to relate some remarkable anecdote of her history, but thought better of it, and said,

'Don't you wear of yerself out with her, sir. She'll break your neck, or break 'er own, afore she's done.'

'Ah!' said I.

'Ride 'ome on this yere 'oss, an' let me walk 'er over in the mornin'.'

O, no, I wouldn't hear of such a thing. I'd ride her back, though heaven should fall. So I mounted and cantered away. I thought I was going to get her home pretty easily; but at the head of the village she turned and gallopped back into the George yard.

Little bow-legs laughed, and asked, 'What will you do, sir?'

'Go in and have a smoke,' said I, 'and try again.'

I went in and smoked a cigar. Then I returned to the brute. I was determined she *should* go home now.

She danced and capered to the no small dismay and delight of the village children and gossips. This seemed to furnish her cunning head with a new idea; for every time she caught sight of a house or cottage with a child or two about she played off these pranks. Not only so, but she played off again upon me all the tricks of the morning. She lay down and rolled in the road, and managed to give my foot something of a bruise. My patience was entirely gone; I whipped her with a will. She rose, filled with rage and surprise, and tore away home like the wind. When we came to that gap in the fence again, up the bank she shot and under the tree—in whose branches I left my second hat—and away across the field. Now came her final, her grand *coup*. I rode her straight at the hedge, expecting her to clear it, from the way she took the ground; but she stopped dead, with her forefeet in the roots of the hedge, and over I'd have gone head foremost into the ditch, like a sack of coals shot by a coalheaver, had I not feared some such catastrophe and gripped the saddle according to Joe's advice.

I got home about tea-time.

'O, here you are! I thought it was all up with you,' said Joe cheerfully.

'Well,' said my father, 'how did you get on, James?'

'Get on, father? It was not the getting on—it was the keeping on!'

'That's it,' laughed Joe.

My father was silent.

I entered the house. I saw my mother had been crying.

'My dear boy,' she exclaimed, 'what a figure! You're crusted with dirt! Where's your hat? Are you hurt much? Get the tea made, Sissy. O, it's a mercy you've a whole bone left in your skin!'

'That you haven't walked home with your head under your arm,' said Sissy.

'I did almost leave it stuck in an oak,' said I.

'No-o!' exclaimed Sissy incredulously.

'I've been so dreadfully alarmed,' said my mother, looking tenderly at me, 'all the day. You've been gone six or seven hours.'

'Five and a half, mother,' said I.

'Wherever have you been so long?'

Whilst I was relating my adventures, my father came in and sat down. When I had finished,

'Now promise,' said my mother, 'that you will never ride that brute again.'

'We-el,' I hesitated and looked at my father.

'O, he's going to try her again to-morrow,' said he, with a twinkle in his eye.

'I'll go out myself,' cried my mother, 'and shoot the nasty brute, before he shall mount her again!'

'You don't reckon the loss, my dear,' said father calmly, smiling.

'I'd rather lose her ten times over than lose my son.'

'Well, well, my dear, we'll put her down to "The Warren."'

Where she may be seen by any gentleman in want of a 'Thoroughbred Nag, fourteen and a half hands, young, and unbroken,' and unbreakable; for let who will possess her, she has not yet seen the man who can be her master.

ON THE NEAREST FRENCH COAST.

(Continued from our Holiday Number.)

Have you good legs? Have you wind to correspond? Are you free from asthma, and also from palpitations of the heart if you mount a tall staircase with gymnastic step? Are you fearless of fresh and forcible gusts of wind which nobody, however sentimental, would dare to call breezes, and which, although sou'-westers, bear but a slight resemblance to their near relation, 'gentle zephyr'? Are you indifferent to a sudden shower, say a squall, coming on, where there is not a hovel behind which, much less a house in which, you can take shelter? Is it all one to you whether the gale makes your cheeks to glow and ruffles your hair into a dusting-mop? Are you philosopher enough to start for a seaside scramble without putting on your best show-off vestments? Have you forethought enough to furnish your pockets with a little stout string; a few coppers (which may serve other needs besides spending and charity); a couple of knives, one long-bladed; an old *Times* or two; a canvas bag, which is not obliged to be as big as a pillowcase; a coarse kitchen-napkin, and a worthless calico handkerchief? An entomologist or microscopist would add to his cargo a few pill-boxes, two or three small vials (not forgetting their corks), and an iron spoon. Finally, do you mind carrying, instead of an expensive cane, the largest, lightest, and toughest umbrella you can procure, strongly metal-shod at the tip, and with a handle pleasant to hold and lean on? It will serve as a walking-stick, parasol, and tent.

Your answer is affirmative on all points? Eh? Very well, then; before taking our leave of Calais, we will devote a day to visiting Cape Blanez (Blanc-nez, White-Nose), the lump of earth you notice on your left, jutting into the sea, while strolling to the end of Calais jetty. It is the section of land corresponding to Dover Cliffs, cut out by the inroad of the strait. Cape Grinez (Gris-nez, Grey-Nose), further westward on the French coast, corresponds to Folkestone in origin and materials.

What day shall we fix to go there? Well, the politest answer would be, 'Whatever day you please, dear sir, or madam;' but in this case the choice does not by any means depend upon ourselves, because time and tide wait for no man. We will take a day, if possible, that promises to be dry and not too windy—in the latter case, on the beach the drifting sand blinds you, fills your mouth and nostrils, and prevents your picking up intensely interesting objects which you throw away before the day is over; up aloft, on the hill-top, you may be carried away flying over the cliff, if the wind blows seawards, which is not often the case. What you must take, to avoid disappointment and perhaps disaster, is a day which will allow you to reach the first stage of your excursion, Sangatte, during ebb-tide; say

two or three hours before low water. Otherwise, while walking leisurely along the beach from Sangatte to the Blanez, picking up shells, inspecting tufts of seaweed, and forgetting that the hands of your watch move ever forwards, without stopping to rest while you are at play, with a rising tide pushed on by the wind, you will incur a good chance of being ducked or drowned. This is one reason why you were advised to buy a half-franc tide-table on arriving at Calais. But fortunately there is a tide-table hung up in the sky, which will enable you to make your arrangements in advance and to lay out your plans before leaving home. At Calais, and of course along the coast within short distances, it is high water about noon at the times of new and full moon. Consequently it is low water about noon, and your favourable opportunity, at the first and last quarters of the moon. An English almanac will help you as well as a French one; and the knowledge of astronomy requisite to reach the Cape in safety is less than would be called for at some competitive examinations.

The 'When' being made clear, next comes the 'How.' A trained pedestrian amateur would easily do the whole thing in a day, on foot, by following the beach, with the sea on his right and the dunes, or sandhills, on the left, from the Calais bathing establishment as far as Sangatte. Anybody will tell him the way to the Etablissement des Bains, if he cannot condescend to join the ladies and children with their *bonnes*, or nursemaids, in the omnibus which starts for that spot from the Grande Place and the Quay. People who are the possessors of only everyday legs are counselled to take a carriage for Sangatte, to await them there and fetch them back. The majority of walkers will not be sorry, on their return thither from the Blanez, to perform the rest of their journey home in a four-wheeled instead of on a ten-toe vehicle. Certainly it is a long round that way by the high-road; but there is no help for it. Moreover what did you come out for except to breathe as much fresh air and see as much of the unknown land as possible? Leaving the town of Saint-Pierre (on whose outskirts you have the convent of the Sacré Cœur to the right, and the St. Pierre railway-station to the left, representing diametrically opposite sets of ideas on opposite sides of the road) you pass Fort Nieulay —useless, but partially repaired by Napoleon III.—after crossing a plain whose crop chiefly consists of sea-rolled pebbles used for mending roads. Amongst the pebbles may be found (growing wild of course) a plant which always strikes the eye—the yellow-horned poppy, glaucium maritimum, not rare, but, as its name implies, hugging the shore, whose handsome deep-cut foliage covered with white down make it quite as fit for bordering parterres as many less hardy introductions. Besides which, it is a British native. At La Chaussée you leave what is once again the Route Nationale No. 1, and by an excellent by-road reach Sangatte, where you find stabling for your horses and shelter for yourself; but if you entertain preconceived notions of dining there after your breezy walk, wisdom will whisper in your ear the prudence of slipping into your carriage at Calais a hamper packed with provisions of urgent necessity, and, perhaps, with a few other trifles besides. Nevertheless you might count upon getting at Sangatte, as well as at the other little inns (where there are any) along the coast,

bread, beer, eau-de-vie, so-so wine, eggs, unsmoked bacon, and, two or three times in the summer, salad. This carriage to Sangatte is a measure of forethought. A French proverb says that everyone ought to *garder une poire pour la soif*, to keep a pear in store in case he should be thirsty. The same rule teaches us to husband a little strength against the time when we may reasonably expect to be weary.

At Sangatte the sandhills cease as a boundary to the sea, and the cliff begins, at first only a yard or two high, then gradually rising and rising until it attains its greatest height at the Blanez. Some few years since, in that direction, a horse ran away with a gendarme on his back, and galloped over the cliff, taking a magnificent leap into empty space; I say 'empty,' because air counts for little more than emptiness when a horse and his rider have to be sustained. The horse was killed, the man got off unhurt; his steed had received all the benefit of the fall.

If the tide is up, or only coming up, you must reach the summit by following the edge of the cliff; but never incur the responsibility of being accompanied there either by half-tipsy men or by spirited children. I once had a nice boy given me in charge to lead by the hand along the brink of the precipice. Of course, the more he was told not to look over to spy out what was going on below, the more he pulled and tugged to do so. And the edge of the cliff is not solid rock, but chalk, gaping with cracks, sometimes visible, sometimes not, portions of which scale off when their time comes, especially after heavy rain; and if you step on them, they may let you down to the regions below, like wicked Bertram in *Robert le Diable*. When that pleasant walk had come to an end, it was fearful to calculate how much I had lost by involuntary transpiration. No; if you respect your own nervous system, never go to the Blanez with foolhardy people.

But the tide is out, and we follow the foot of the cliff, at first composed of alluvial earths, but soon all chalk, growing into a sheer wall of ever-increasing altitude. On its face here and there, out of reach of any ladder, wooden or rope, are black-green spots. They are plants of the true wild cabbage—a botanical curiosity—found also at Dover; but singularly enough, unlike Dover, Blanez has no true wild samphire, which Shakespeare has immortalised. A pair of ravens breed annually on some ledge where they fancy that no one can get at them; their young are occasionally taken nevertheless. It is said that they will suffer no other pair of ravens to make the Blanez their home; and also that if one of the couple is shot, the survivor goes somewhere—why should not birds have their matrimonial agencies?—and soon brings a new mate home.

Still advancing, we know not whether to gaze most at the tremendous white ruin which overhangs our heads, or to contemplate the marvels on which we are stepping. There is sand, the slow manufacture of ages, the produce of rocks grinding rocks, as diamond cuts diamond. Sand must be a very ancient article, because rocks exist composed of sandstone, which we might therefore call the shoddy of earth's overcoat. There are plenty of sausage-shaped and spherical pyrites, which sanguine folk have taken for gold, so brilliant is their fissure when you break them. Enormous ammonites, the nautiluses of bygone ages, which floated about hither and thither when more than milk-

warm seas covered the simmering earth, lie still in death, and now serve you as pavement. On boulders, whose travels would be long to trace, hang bunches of seaweeds, the hiding-places of crabs, while their surface offers a resting-place to the herbivorous periwinkle, the silk-spinning mussel, and the carnivorous whelk, besides a multitude of other organisms on which one might write a bulky 'seaside book.' If only for the sake of seeing these things at home, it is worth while to come when the tide is out.

The legend says that Julius Cæsar's soldiers were frightened when they saw the sea, on which they were to embark for the invasion of Britain, retire before them, leaving their vessels dry. In those days, when omens were potent, the hitherto unknown phenomenon of tides must have appeared portentous to the Roman mythologians who witnessed it. Be that as it may, I have known dwellers on the shores of the Mediterranean, whose waters maintain nearly always the same level, express a wondering wish to behold the strange things exposed to view, and brought within the reach of a child, by the periodical flux and reflux of ocean.

At last the culminating point of the cliff is reached. High as it is, there is a still higher hill, which you do not see, behind it, which will one day be cut into by the never-tiring teeth of the waves, converting it into a cliff, indeed; not, however, in my time, nor in yours. Still it will and must come, as surely, though not so quickly, as the sun will rise tomorrow morning. Here you acknowledge, with thanks for the advice, the necessity of forethought in timing your visit. All the way from Sangatte up to where you are standing there is no path or rocky stair by which you can climb from below to above. Suppose you are caught by an advancing tide when half-way between the two points, with a stiff breeze lashing the waves to make them gallop faster onwards. You may run till you are out of breath, but soon find you cannot win the race. You are hemmed in close to the foot of the cliff till your garments are whitened by rubbing against it. A broken wave, spreading, wets your feet. You walk a minute or two up to the knees in water; then up to the waist. It rises higher, and then you stop short. Were you to remain there, the breaking waves would dash you against the face of the cliff, and you might be battered to death before you were drowned; unless, by coolly looking about, you could discover close by some ledge or mass of fallen chalk up to which you might by possibility climb, remaining there, shivering, wet, and desolate, until the receding tide should permit your escape. But in such extremities few people can look about them coolly, scanning heights and guessing at distances. They lose their presence of mind, and with it every chance of safety, unless assisted by others. But the probabilities here are vastly in disfavour of any assistance being at hand. It is the romantic incident of the *Antiquary* without the rescue.

The mere thought of the danger —which is not imaginary, but has been actually incurred from time to time—parches one's mouth; and look! here, at the foot of the cliff, below what is often high-water mark, issue bright and limpid springs, similar springs to which, in seaside villages on a like geological formation, occasionally constitute the only supply. The inhabitants go down to them between tides and fetch what they

are likely to want during the interval. This water is fresh, sweet, and cool, but not too cold. Taste it in the hollow of your hand. Eat with it this crust of bread, and it will give you strength to climb to the heights above.

A few paces further on, the upper edge of the cliff makes a dip. It descends rapidly, without quite reaching the level of the shore, and mounts again, but never attains anything like its former height. In fact, we have passed the head of Cape Blanez. At the lowest dip of the cliff we espy a narrow path which, taking the hint given by a cranny eaten out by a dribbling watercourse, enables you, by crawling up its slippery surface, to set foot on what is really land, where your delighted eye once more beholds a small building—a welcome sight in the midst of a wilderness, although it turns out to be, not a dwelling-place, but only a coast-guards' station, in which the men find warmth and shelter after their rounds, until they are relieved at the stated hour. This insignificant-looking path is of local importance, because it affords the only means of getting up or down along a considerable extent of coast, and is consequently dignified with the topographical title of Le Cran, the notch or the nick. The moisture oozing out at the bottom of the notch feeds watercress and a still more famous plant, beloved of all boys who read Cook's *Voyages*, namely, scurvy grass, with its round shining leaves. If it only grew by the side of the road which leads to the North Pole!

From Le Cran, a path through the fields, which you cannot mistake, leads to the village of Escalles (do not pronounce either of the *ss*), if you wish to go there. It is very ancient, but otherwise nothing particular; was once called Scala, staircase or ladder, perhaps because it was only in that way accessible from the beach; has a duck-pond, a rude village church, a *cabaret* of the usual country type, with a large room full of little tables, at which frugal and hard-working landed proprietors quaff generous beer on Sundays and fête-days. Streets were thought unnecessary when Escalles was founded; so the houses are placed as regularly as if they had been dropped from the sky by a passing hailstorm; which gives them a detached and independent air, as well as surrounding them with luxuriant parterres of ornamental weeds, amongst which you may find an odd-looking foul-smelling medicinal plant—henbane, hyosciamus niger.

If you don't care for the village and don't want a snack, you may as well mount the Blanez at once from Le Cran, following the edge of the cliff to the left. The ascent is steep, but, with air *ad libitum* and without a shrub to intercept the breeze, is hardly fatiguing; besides which, we are not scrambling upwards for life. Aloft, there is a smooth slope of turf bespotted with the usual chalk-loving plants, down which you may roll over and over at ease, taking care not to get shot overboard. In August there is an abundance of a pretty little orchis well worth the hardy-plant amateur's digging up and carrying away. I have heard of the fly ophrys thereabouts; but though I have not found it, it may exist nevertheless close by, to be hunted up by some more fortunate mortal. Full many a flower is born to blush unseen. The Blanez has so extensive a superficial area that so humble a plant may easily escape detection. We are on up-

land ground, but by no means on table-land. Besides that mamelon or elevated boss on the earth, on whose top of course we must stand before we leave, the hill is scored with trench and earthwork, dug out and thrown up long ago, and now covered with the same green grass mantle which clothes the whole back and shoulders of the Cape. Cæsar's Camp they call it; may be so. I wish I had a thousand guineas for every veritable Cæsar's Camp that I have seen.

But man is born to look beyond the present, not less in respect to space than to time. Rest, therefore, your limbs on the slippery green carpet, and enjoy the view. This is the point of the French coast which is about the nearest to England. On a clear calm summer's day, the sight across Channel from the Blanez is magnificent. The blue ocean-stream puts on such tempting looks that the row over, or even the swim over, appears a mere nothing; while the cliffs of Dover—a fairy-land slightly clad in bluish-white gauze—smilingly whisper, 'Do come and see me.' To the right they stop short, almost abruptly, owing to the bend of the English coast towards Deal; but to the left they sink gradually, their visible beauty growing fainter and fainter, like the departing harmonies of a band of music, until a dark line only marks the land-horizon in the direction of Hythe and Dungeness. This summer-picture, however, is a flattering likeness; the truth, but not the whole truth. A different phase of the same landscape would appeal quite as much to the ear as to the eye, and to the imagination more than either. Fancy a lowering cloud-covered sky, a gray threatening sea furrowed with dirty white stripes, a narrow horizon, no English coast visible, the breakers below sustaining one continued roar, above which, perhaps, may rise a piercing cry from a vessel in distress, 'All hands lost!' is no unfrequent report. The wind is less audible than it should be from its violence, because the bare back of Blanez gives it nothing to vibrate against. Not the slightest shelter, retreat, or refuge from the pelting squall is there, for Blanez's solitude is not broken even by a lighthouse. Those stones fixed in the grass and smeared with whitewash are all the coastguard-men have to guide their steps during the darkest nights or (when they are, perhaps, quite as much needed) the thickest fogs. A winter's storm on the Blanez is a scene for Ossian.

Inhale, then, the invigorating air now that fair weather gives its permission. Take hearty lungfuls; lay in a stock against your return to dark, close, and dingy quarters. It exhilarates without inebriating, and would almost, one seems to think, snatch a body from the jaws of death. Blessings on the pure fresh air, which makes everything look so beautifully transparent! Looking down there to the left, across the little bay in the middle of whose curve stands the village of Wissant, we discern another cape, Grinez, proudly displaying its first-class lighthouse. To the right we ascertain the position of Calais by its toy jetty, its hog's-bristle shipmasts, and its baby public edifices.

Ah! hunger gives the hint to be on the move. Nothing easier. *Facilis descensus.* The gentle grassy slope lies before you, without hindrance or impediment. During the mushroom season this open down is frequented by the English colony of Calais and St. Pierre, who occasionally carry home basketfuls of excellent

fungi, which help them both to stews and to ketchup. The French are too much afraid of all wild mushrooms to eat them; and they are right, if they don't know the good from the bad—which very few do, although the knowledge is by no means difficult of attainment—a considerable number of people being annually poisoned. Keeping on the right side of the cliff-cracks, you reach Sangatte in safety, ready to attack the repast which awaits you at Calais. Should you wish to see Cape Gris-nez, where there are only a few scattered houses, the excursion may be varied by taking a carriage for Wissant, and following the high-road to Boulogne as far as the village of St. Inglevert, which has had its day and its celebrities. One would not think so, to look at it now. But in 1390, when Charles VI. was king, there was held here a famous tournament kept open for a month, and recorded in history as the Pas d'Armes, in which three French chevaliers gave the challenge to all the world in general and to English seigneurs in particular. The Englishmen, it seems, got the worst of it, and the Frenchmen of course crowed loud and clear.

When a diligence ran from Calais to Boulogne, a little beyond St. Inglevert there used to be a charming view over a vast extent of country, on commencing the descent which leads to Marquise. Since the days of that tournament a great deal of water has flowed under the bridge of Avignon; but all that water, in the course of its passage, has not washed away the St. Inglevert view. Close to Wissant is another Cæsar's Camp; you see my thousand-guinea speculation is not a bad one. At Wissant there is a general shop and inn combined—with linen-drapery, candles, and cheese at one end, and victuals and drink and tobacco-smoke at the other—where you can sleep when it is not full, as it may be when geologists and artists take their walks abroad, and where you can satisfy cravings for wholesome fare (if content with what happens to be in the larder) with a limited possibility of fresh fish. There being but one shop or inn, you cannot mistake it; but if memory is not treacherous, it is kept by the brothers Duval, successors to their honoured father and mother, and probably to their great-grandfather and great-grandmother. From Wissant, if a pedestrian, you are able to visit both the capes, Blanez and Grinez.

Marine-aquarium amateurs, eaters of mussels of their own gathering only, seaweed people, and the like, will do well to devote a day to the village of Wimereux, on the coast, near Boulogne. Take your railway ticket—not a return ticket, *aller et retour*—from Calais to Wimille. Excursionising with a return ticket is taking your pleasure in harness, with a bit in your mouth. Never let me hear that you have committed such a mistake a second time. From the Wimille station, with the sea before you, you have only to step down to Wimereux. There you find an inn, kept by M. and Mme. Dobelle, the latter *née* Joséphine Mercier, where you can lunch abundantly and by possibility sleep; but in summer these seaside villages within easy reach of rail are overrun with all sorts of Parisians, sometimes even overcrowded. Spring tides favour your visit the most, because then the water recedes the furthest and exposes the greatest extent of rock to view. These, you know, occur at new and full moon; the former is the more effectual, because then the sun and the moon are both pulling

at the sea one way together. On reaching Wimereux while the tide is ebbing, you will at once walk down to the beach. Out in the sea stands a fort, built by Napoleon I. to protect France from English attacks, which at high water rises sheer out of the waves, but at low water is left high and dry, supported on a reef of rocks naturally hollowed out into countless little basins, each of which is a lovely aquarium which would command admiration anywhere, could it be carried away bodily in its natural condition. These rocks abound with objects dear to collectors. The lover of shellfish can gather excellent mussels (taking them at the very lowest water's edge), coal-black periwinkles, and whelks, tough and requiring a deal of cooking; the Norfolk fishermen first boil and then fry them. For the naturalist there are abundant sea-anemones of various shades and sizes, including the little orange daisylike fellow who blossoms on sand that fills up crevices, the beautiful feathery ivory-white one, and the big one puffed out like a proud frog and covered with fragments of the shells whose contents he has digested. Sea-anemones may be detached either by carefully raising and scraping them off with the blunt edge of a *sou*, or by tapping round about them with a stone until they fall off in disgust from the rock to which they cling. The iron spoon also sometimes renders good service. Of seaweeds there is a perfect glut, with greater variety than is perceived at first sight, comprising both the useful and the ornamental. Of the first, I need only mention chondrus crispus, carrageen, or Irish moss; and, although it varies so greatly in appearance that one of its specific names is polymorphus, anybody who has seen it once will have little difficulty in recognising it again. Its hue while growing is a dull brownish red increasing in depth with age. Fresh gathered, it requires several careful washings and pickings over. Separate the tufted fronds into sprigs, boil them down for two or three hours, in plain water, to a jelly, pass it through a cullender, and let it stand to settle. Pour it off from the impurities at the bottom, and use it for making jellies and blancmanges exactly as if it were isinglass. For scrofulous constitutions it is an excellent corrective.

If you happen to arrive two or three days after a storm, the beach will furnish sundry waifs and strays besides the native algæ which grow on the rocks. With these you may form an album of nature-printed seaweeds with coloured plates, the secret of whose production consists in arranging them in water, on the card or paper on which they are to remain. You may do it in a common handbasin, sustaining the paper with your left hand and displaying the specimen with a knitting-needle in your right. Raise the paper gently, cover with fine muslin and blotting-paper, and put in press under a heavy weight. In a day or two, uncover and inspect, until gradually dried. You thus obtain a souvenir of the nearest French coast, which can hardly be distinguished from a well-executed coloured drawing.

E. S. D.

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

SOME SOCIAL AND LITERARY ASPECTS OF THE WAR.

BEYOND the details of news and political discussions in press and parliament, there are several directions in which the reflex action of the war in the East is very perceptible. These are to be seen both in society and literature. It is becoming quite a common thing to hear of one friend or another that he is packing up and going off to the East. 'Our own Correspondents' are abounding in the present war. It is not only that the London papers have their representatives in Turkey, but many of the provincial dailies and some weeklies assert their dignity and importance by having their correspondents, who get as near the scene of action as possible, or are themselves in the middle of action. As a rule, the military correspondents are not men who get in the rear of armies, and there collect news, but men who take their chance of bullets or sword-thrusts. We even hear of them going abroad without taking the obvious precaution of making the people who send them out insure their lives. A great deal of sympathy and respect is due to such men. They come next to the surgeons, who unfalteringly pursue their duties within a rain of missiles just the same as if they were in the wards of a hospital at home. The correspondents watch and make the history which is being transacted around them. If faithful narratives are to be given, those narratives must come from these correspondents. If awful lessons are to be gathered up, these lessons—a poor consolation for the carnage—must also be derived from them. We may give full sympathy to brave soldiers fighting patriotically on either side, and to all those who in the interest of knowledge or mercy are to be found in the contending ranks. But there is another class—a curious element—in the present war, an element which was almost entirely absent in the Franco-German war, namely, the presence of Englishmen who are fighting for Russia or Turkey, and who may consequently be sometimes found fighting against one another.

People who take up this Eastern Question take it up very violently indeed. Russophobia is nearly as incurable as hydrophobia. The correlated Turcophilism is one of the very strongest *isms*. Probably there are not very many who take up the Turkish cause, but those who do so take it up violently. It is amusing enough at times to listen to the talk of the smoking-rooms of the clubs. The Turk is a most gentlemanly fellow. There is no Bulgarian Christian who is worthy to lick his boots. Constantinople is the most delightful place in the world. Turkey, of all countries, is the very country for emigration. The country was improving, and is improving, except for the war. Why don't we send out doctors and stores and nurses to help the Turkish soldiers—do something more than the miserable bit of good we are trying to do? More extended and more emphatic

still is the feeling about Russia. Men have got up the facts about Russian deeds in Poland, Turkestan, and the Caucasus. They know that Constantinople is the intended prize of the war. They know it on the best private authority. This or that fact has filtrated to them through the talk of ambassadors or generals. So they are ready to aid the Turk, to subscribe for him, to fight for him, to vote for him, to send out an expedition to protect Stamboul for him, to get the country to go to war for him. On the other hand there is a parallel enthusiasm aroused against the Turks and in favour of the Russians. The active fires of the agitation of last autumn are perhaps extinct, but the embers are still smouldering. There are still people who are excited by the last speech of Mr. Gladstone's and the last letter of Mr. Freeman's. They abhor the 'unspeakable Turk.' They recognise the Russians as chivalrous crusaders. They long for the regeneration of the Christian races of Eastern Europe. They look forward to the revival of a Greek Empire at Constantinople. The general reflections which suggest themselves are that, with distinct schools of opinion so violently contrasted, it is extremely improbable that the country will be dragged into a war. Then there is the suspicion that the main interest is chiefly confined to politicians, military men, and *littérateurs*, and that the general mass of the people, up to this point, are not vividly moved on the subject either in one way or in the other.

But though this is the case with the public generally, there are many individuals who feel the merits of their own side of the case so strongly, that they are offering their services to one or the other of the two Governments. Thus we may have the unnatural phenomenon of Englishmen fighting under Turkish colours arrayed against Englishmen fighting under Russian colours. Such men may, however, plead their enthusiasm and their convictions. But there is another class of men, for whom one can feel very little sympathy. These are the men who have gone out to fight for mere fighting's sake. They are free-lances. They are the soldiers of fortune, who turn up in every great war. They abounded in the war between Federals and Confederates. They abounded in the Franco-German war. They were certainly not absent during the civil war in Spain. We believe that more Englishmen are to be found in this Turco-Russian war than in any other war of recent times. In reading Russian and Turkish history, the presence of Englishmen in the service of both powers for generations past is a curious and constant element. But if there is any fighting going on in any part of the world the Englishman cannot be restrained from taking part in it. It is written that, at one of the Parisian revolutions, an honest English coachman witnessed a conflict on the Boulevards from a window. He witnessed it in amaze. Then he dashed into the street, seized a musket, careless where he fired it so that he had a share in the fight, and was at once shot down himself. So there are certain Englishmen who start off to get some shooting as soon as they hear that some human shooting is to be had. To them we feel tempted to apply Eliab's words: 'I know thy pride and the haughtiness of thy heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.' They will plead that soldiering is their business, and that they want

to learn the art of war. Generally speaking, they are sublimely indifferent on which side they fight, if they can only get the fighting. Scott's wonderful portraiture of Captain Dalgetty has permanently fixed the type for ever; the Dalgetty clan never dies out. We had some famous soldiers of fortune, such as Lord Dundonald and Sir de Lacy Evans, Captain Sherard Osborne and Hobart Pasha. We do not know what the chances of the Eastern War may turn up, but there are certainly Englishmen who need to be very distinctly warned that they are sinning against the neutrality laws. Of course when a man is safely across the narrow seas, it is hard for the neutrality laws to reach him. But it is just possible that a country may suffer through a violation of the laws by those who are essentially fillibusters.

The press, in the way of daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly publications, has been busy with the subject, and books, like heavy artillery, are now coming to the front. A good deal of fighting is to be found in some of the volumes. We need hardly say that Mr. E. A. Freeman has his book.* He is always producing books. He reminds us of the great scholars of the seventeenth century in his wonderful power of work. We were in hopes that he was going to give us a volume of history, and we are great admirers of Mr. Freeman as a writer of history. He seems originally to have had the idea of giving us what would hardly have failed to be a brilliant monograph on Turkish history. But he changed his mind, and has given us a huge political pamphlet instead. It is marked by the partisan spirit, not by the historical spirit. Speaking roughly, there have been a dozen great Sultans and a dozen inferior Sultans, and Mr. Freeman only gives a few dozen pages to the whole of them. He gives us the idea of a highly excited pedagogue talking to very young children on a subject of which they are profoundly ignorant. So much injustice has Mr. Freeman done to himself and to his great theme.

A work on *Savage and Civilised Russia** is of the anti-Russian kind. It is history enlivened by invective. But W. R. has done what Mr. Freeman has failed to do. He has really thrown together a very fair sketch of Russian history. Indeed, we hardly know where we should be able to refer for any similar sketch of Russian or Turkish history. To a great extent he bases his work on Karasmin, the one great historian of Russia, who is almost entirely unknown in this country. It is curious how the French translate Russian books and the English do not. W. R. demonstrates the rule that a modern nation by the very law of its being presses down upon a southern sea-board, which offers it all the powers of development. The writer seems to have spared no pains in the investigation of an immense field of literature.

A book of actual experiences in the East evidences that fighting spirit of which we spoke.† Mr. Salusbury went out last September as a volunteer to take part with the Russians in Servia. Before he left Servia Mr. Salusbury probably formed some conception of the nature of the con-

* *The Ottoman Power: its Nature, its Growth, and its Decline.* By Edward A. Freeman, D.C.L. (Macmillan.)

* *Savage and Civilised Russia.* By W. R. (Longmans.)

† *Two Months with Tchernaieff in Servia.* By Philip H. B. Salusbury. (Chapman & Hall.)

flict, and was able to give an intelligent sympathy to the Servian cause. But we may venture to say that he went out utterly uninformed respecting the history, politics, and moral questions involved in the conflict. And we do not suppose that he made very much progress in these matters during his two months' campaigning. He was about as raw and inexperienced a youth as ever took the ribbons and the shilling. He appears proud of his ignorance, and, as Dr. Johnson once said, he has a great deal to be proud of. He amuses himself by telling us that he mistook a local Pope who blessed the Russian arms for the Pope of Rome, and swallowed a chilli, thinking it was something cool. Mr. Salusbury's one object was to see a battle. Though very ill he waited till he saw one, and when he had seen one he came quietly away. We could almost wish that he had left an arm or a leg on the field, that he might thoroughly appreciate what war is like. He tells us that Tchernaieff did not at all like him, although he himself decidedly liked Tchernaieff. This a little reminds us of Dean Gaisford's parallel between Alexander the Great and Alexander the Coppersmith. We ought to add that Mr. Salusbury has the undoubted merit of clear, simple, vivid narrative.

Lord Robert Montagu has moreover given us a work on the Eastern Question.* He goes into the matter with his usual thoroughness and earnestness, and those who are thoroughly studying the subject—a very small minority, by the way—will find him very helpful. There is a great deal of useful discussion on the history of these later days—that essentially modern history which ought to be best known, but which is least known. In literary workmanship Lord Robert lacks shape and force, and his book is really a magnified pamphlet. He is thoroughly pro-Turkish. He does not seem to believe in any English statesman whatever, and has a most decided antipathy to Prince Bismarck. He imparts somewhat irrelevant theological matter, and pronounces the Czar to be Antichrist. In his conclusion he warms into a vein of genuine eloquence. The multiplication of such books shows that the reading and writing part of society, whatever may be the case generally, are intensely realising the vast political issues looming in the distance, and of which the untrained eye cannot take in the exact distances and proportions. At the beginning of the Crimean war Mr. Tennyson sent a metrical invitation to Mr. Maurice to the Isle of Wight, and said that he and his guest would discuss the chances. And this is exactly the discussion which is going on everywhere at the present time in every social circle of the land. 'Ottoman, Mussulman, who shall win?'

We come now to what is, after all drawbacks, the best book on Turkey that we have. Still, Colonel Baker's book on Turkey* hardly strikes us as being of the same value as the companion work of Mr. Wallace's on Russia. Nevertheless it is pleasant and useful reading, although desultory to a degree; and where we have been able to test it, it is accurate in its statements. The vein of personal narrative, which runs through

* *Foreign Policy: England and the Eastern Question.* By the Right Hon. Lord Robert Montagu, M.P. (Chapman & Hall.)

* *Turkey in Europe.* By James Baker, M.A., formerly 8th Hussars. (Cassell, Petter, & Galpin.)

the volume, quickens the interest and affords an agreeable relief to the historical and political portions. We do not know anything about the author; we rather wish we did. Colonel Baker seems to have emigrated to Turkey as a farmer, and, so far as we can gather, the agreeable impression is left upon our minds that he very fairly succeeded. At least, he strenuously urges upon his fellow-countrymen that this may be a means of obtaining both coin and comfort. When the wave of invasion has swept by, this may still be the case, though the movement must be arrested for the present. Certainly a peaceful invasion of emigrants would do more, both for Christendom and Turkey, than the serried legions of the Czar. The general tendency of the volume is considerably to raise the character of the Turks. It is hardly accurate to speak of the work as altogether pro-Turkish. The author holds the balance fairly between the Moslem and the Christian. He gives a faithful account of the Bulgarian Church, and the intrepid manner in which in modern days it has secured independence for itself. This was a great blow for the Greek clergy, who have always been the greatest oppressors of the Christians. Colonel Baker was brought into close connection with Mr. Brophy, whose book on Bulgaria, very excellent in its way, is thoroughly pro-Turkish, and has somewhat tinged his view of things. It is impossible to deal separately with each point as it arises in Colonel Baker's bulky work. Our author carefully examines the passes and gives his opinion of the strategical position. Various chapters are devoted to the army and navy. He is of the opinion, contrary to the popular view, that Turkey has made great advances since the time of the Crimean war. The chapters on the Jews and the gipsies will be read with great interest. The numerous class who take an interest in hunting large game will look with eagerness for Colonel Baker's experiences in deer-stalking. Those experiences, however, were of a limited kind. Colonel Baker had a bad accident, which, indeed, was so serious that he was obliged to come back to England for a time, and we gather that he is at least tolerably well recovered.

Colonel Baker amply discusses the important work which the American missionaries are doing in Turkey. They at least succeed better than the missionaries of any other nation. If the missionary effort succeeds, we may reasonably expect the best European civilising effects in its train. Colonel Baker's volume is mainly concerned with Bulgaria, to the exclusion of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which he does not appear to have visited. It is very hard to understand 'the rights of things' respecting Bulgaria. Authors contradict each other, and often contradict themselves. Some authors have said that the Bulgarians are a mixture of fool and fiend, and Mr. Forsyth gets up in the House of Commons and says that some of them are the most amiable of mankind. Colonel Baker indorses Lord Strangford's assertion, now of old date, that spurious insurrections were deliberately fostered in Bulgaria that excuse might be given for foreign intervention in the affairs of Turkey. The talk of society just now is supplementing the evidences and conclusions of the books. It notices that Bulgaria is slipping away from the Russian programme, and Constantinople is substituted. It asks how the cause of Bulgaria is fought

for in Asia Minor, and whether the extermination of Circassians is a logical reply to 'massacres of Christians.' It will be observed that of the five books recently published out of a crowd of others which we have noted, with every desire to be perfectly impartial, two of them, Mr. Freeman's and Mr. Salusbury's, are decidedly anti-Turkish, while Lord R. Montagu's, W. R.'s, and, on the whole, Colonel Baker's, are decidedly pro-Turkish: *αἴλινον αἴλινον εἴπε τὸ δ' εὖ νικάτω.*

'ONE KNOWS.'

We were told a little incident the other day which impressed us strongly. Most of us know Paris. We have made a little visit, or perhaps many visits and long, to that pleasantest of capitals. We have lounged in woods and gardens, have listened to the open-air music, which is so charming just now; we have sat in the open drawing-room of the Boulevards; we have done operas and theatres, had our little dinners and light suppers, have done picture-galleries and museums. It is all very pleasant and delightful, and we are not tired if we are doing it for the twentieth time. But there is one peculiarly Parisian sight which ought to be 'done,' and which all visitors to Paris do once, if they do it no more. This is the Morgue—the abode of dread and terror, the ghostly and oft-dripping slabs, the tragic sights, often the tragic sounds, of weepers,—all the terrible associations of violence and suicide. The Morgue to the Paris sights is like the mummy carried about the Egyptian feast in Mr. Long's picture this year. Certainly there is a death's head at the feast. We may forget many Paris sights, but we never forget the Morgue.

One day the form of a beautiful young female was carried into the Morgue. She might have been the original of Hood's 'One more unfortunate,' surely, except perhaps the 'Song of the Shirt,' the most pathetic of songs. Nothing was known of her history, or even of her name. She must have walked to the marbled quay of the Seine, and have thrown herself from bridge or parapet into the deep waters. Whatever passion or crime or sorrow might have been evidenced by her fair face in life was blotted out in death. She was simply human and beautiful. The beholder was left to guess what might have been the story of bereavement, or desertion, or sorrow, or temptation. Now, at last, she was, or seemed to be, at peace. So far there is nothing very important in the incident. It is paralleled, sadly and often, in beautiful guilty Paris. But there was a certain singular circumstance in the history of this particular case. There was diligent search made, as is always the case, for any clue to identity or explanation of the tragedy; and in the unhappy girl's bosom there was a card or piece of paper safely secured, and just two words written, 'One knows.' Man would never know her history; but God knows that history, and what brought it to its awful earthly end.

A whole world of pathos seems wrapt up in the expression. It was a mute appeal from earth to heaven, from man to God, from time to eternity. At what point of her human history did the stress of circumstance prove too much for her frail delicate nature? Was it in some feeling of utter hopelessness and despair that she broke down, that the balance of feelings and faculties was lost, that Reason gave way for the moment, driven from her sovereign

throne? Had she erred from woman's purity, and in one keen moment of agonised remorse cut off a wearing torturing life? Had she struggled on unassisted, with every avenue of honest employment closed, and with only blank starvation staring her in the face? Had husband, child, and friend been lost, and she had deliberately reckoned that a life forlorn was not worth the having? They say that Nature will not endure beyond a certain point, but, up to that point, what an accumulation and concentration of sufferings is possible! Had faith and patience, tested a thousand times, broken down at last? We see the fall, but we do not see the long series of resistances which ended in the fatal lapse. Human scrutiny is impossible, but 'One knows.'

To how much of the criticisms, condemnations, and ungenerous estimates of the world might the same plaintive answer be pleaded. Life, on the surface, is so full of inequality and injustice. To how many of us it is a long summer day, almost unbroken by a cloud! We cannot for ourselves believe that things are distributed with such perfect evenness as some philosophers suppose. If there are some lives crowded with threnody and tragedy, there seem to be others of unwavering intense happiness. We see people who grow up amid all the helps and safeguards of society, who have been shielded from all touch and knowledge of evil, to whom has come as an heirloom the inheritance of a sweet nature and ordered life, to whom has been transmitted name and position, and to whom the whole path of life has been made easy and strewn with vivid flowers. And of others it may be said, in the pathetic Hebrew phrase, 'All these things are against me.' The whole set of conditions has been reversed. There has never been a chance of happiness, hardly of virtue. In the battle of life they have had to contest each inch of a hardly bearable existence. Often there has been some dark page of history which has shadowed and marred all the rest of life. And those who bewail weak frustrated lives, and speak pitifully of lapses, errors, and even of crimes, must bear in mind that they must not judge, inasmuch as they cannot know the whole environment of circumstances. 'One knows.'

Surely theologians might make a real use of this argument. Are not the inequalities and injustices of life, the poverty and struggle, the moral evil and the physical disease, a proof that what we call life is only a segment of existence, after all? If there is any truth in the doctrine of Final Causes, while everything in Nature has its function and its scope, man has a maimed, dwarfed, and imperfect existence. There are possibilities of happiness never achieved; germs of goodness never elicited by pure skies and dews; embryonic powers and faculties never developed, and even never suspected. Can it be that the shadow and evil, the death and the disappointment, are correlative to some unknown good; that those 'who sow in tears shall reap in joy'? 'One knows.'

NEW BOOKS.

The extremely clever and interesting writer who calls herself Lady Barker has given us another pleasant book, marked with her usual keenness of observation and her power of graceful minute description. She seems quite a ubiquitous being. We have references to India, New Zealand, and American experiences. But

she prefers the old country, after all. 'I have no patience with you pampered Londoners, who want perpetual sunshine in addition to your other blessings, without saying a word about discomfort. You are all much too civilised and luxurious, and your lives are made far too smooth for you altogether. Come out here, and try to keep house on the top of a hill, with servants whose language you don't understand, a couple of children, and a small income; and then, as dear Mark Twain says, "you will know something about woe."' Lady Barker introduces us to her baby, and we become quite interested in the baby and its perambulator. She tells us of some wonderful Constantia at the Cape, and the *liqueur* is so named from Constance, the daughter of an old Dutch governor. The earthy taste of South African wine, which some of us have learned to abhor, is derived from the red dust on the grapes, and might seem to be an avoidable fault. On the whole, we do not think that the perusal of her book is calculated to encourage emigration to Natal. We don't seem to care much for Maritzburg, although Lady Barker has had the good taste to avoid any reference to Bishop Colenso and the divided state of society there. Her sketches of native character are extremely well done. She had a long argument with a Kaffir lady, whom she tried to persuade that in the case of twins it was not necessary to put one of the babies to death. What she says about the atrocities consequent on the African superstition of witchcraft raises the inquiry whether such cruelties could not be abolished, as we abolished the suttee in India. The book is the fruit of the genuine observation and reflection of a year, and, like everything else which Lady Barker has written, is well deserving of perusal.*

In the province of fiction we think our readers will be interested in Mr. Fenn's new work, *A Little World.*† Mr. Fenn possesses some very remarkable merits. In his delineations of the lower phases of London life, Mr. Fenn comes next to Dickens himself; indeed, he has done the London cabman and the London street ruffian in a way which Dickens himself has not surpassed. He has a true Dutch Ostade-like manner of depicting a homely interior. There is always a healthful natural tone about his works. We do not think that he excels in the construction of a plot. The incidents and characters are stiffly put together, like the parts of a toy puzzle. The artistic element lies rather in the faithful minute reproduction of the scenes of humble life than in the development of character and working out of the story. Mr. Fenn, however, possesses a faculty, the very highest which can be accorded to a story-teller: he succeeds in riveting our attention and carrying us on to the very end. The duty of a reviewer becomes very pleasant and easy when he has such a book as Mr. Fenn's to review.

We are glad to welcome a work so thoroughly scholarly and original as Mr. Mahaffy's *Social Life in Greece*‡ to a second edition. Mr. Mahaffy writes 'Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin,' after his name, and there can be hardly a higher literary distinction; but this is almost the best contribution

* *A Year's Housekeeping in South Africa.* By Lady Barker. (Macmillan.)

† *A Little World.* By George Manville Fenn. (Henry S. King.)

‡ *Social Life in Greece, from Homer to Menander.* By the Rev. J. P. Mahaffy, M.A. (Macmillan.)

in modern scholarship that Dublin has ever sent us. In its intimate knowledge of Greek life the book resembles Bekker's *Charicles;* but while a delight for scholars, this is a book which the general reader is fully capable of enjoying. Mr. Mahaffy takes a high view of Greek culture, and is opposed to those who vilipend it, like Mr. Froude and Mr. Lowe. The accurate artistic delineation and the keen philosophical and analytical power of the work give it a high educational value.

We would especially mention also Mr. Taylor's work on the *Aquarium.** The Aquaria at Brighton, the Crystal Palace, and Westminster—we give them in order of merit—have familiarised us all with the aquarium, and young people will now be studying the subject in the natural aquaria of the rock-pools of the coast. Mr. Taylor's book will convey much scientific knowledge and useful practical hints.

Young students who are only beginning Tasso, or those who are unable to read *La Gierusalemme Liberata* in the original, will gain something by reading *Tasso's Enchanted Ground.*† It is to be hoped, indeed, in this age of high culture that the number of these is not very great. Italian is a very easy language. Bishop Wilson declared that he learned it in one afternoon. Robert Hall learned it in old age, that he might judge of Macaulay's parallel between Milton and Dante. We may hope that the present volume may cause many young people to learn Italian. The book consists of an expansion of what the translators of epic poems used to call 'the argument' of each book of an epic. It is the story of Tasso's poems, not unlike in design to Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare.* We are afraid we must say that in all such works the poetry, like subtle spirit, has a tendency to evaporate. The author, or, as we rather suspect, the authoress, would have done well to have added to each chapter some extracts from the original or from some excellent translation, like that of Fairfar, or both English and Italian. The volume will have its own niche of interest and usefulness; indeed, it is remarkable that so obvious an undertaking has not been undertaken before.

* (Messrs. Hardwick & Bogue.)

† *Tasso's Enchanted Ground: the Story of the 'Jerusalem Delivered.'* (Hatchards.)

A PLEASANT EVENING.

O, FRESH as fair, sweet English girl,
Who, out of pure good-nature,
Essay'd with me the waltz's whirl,
Regardless of my stature;

And who, though I was almost old
Enough to be your father,
Was neither silent, brusque, nor cold,
But seem'd to like me rather;

Who chatted, danced another dance,
Till in my exultation
I thought it quite a happy chance
You were not my relation.

For then you had not had the power,
Though ne'er so bright and beaming,
To make me waste one pleasant hour
In sweet (if idle) dreaming.

Till I forgot that I was stout,
While you were slight as willow,
And had pathetic thoughts about
My solitary pillow.

Till I forgot that I was curst
With gout and indigestion,
And in a sentimental burst
Had almost popp'd the question.

Till—well, your mother claim'd my arm
To lead her to her carriage,
And proudly praised your wit, your charm,
And—your approaching marriage.

Ah, owner of that open brow,
I fear that I shall miss you;
I would I were your father now,
A moment—just to kiss you;

My eyes to your pure eyes to lift
With frank affection kind,
To speak my blessing, give my gift,
Without a thought behind.

THE MODERN ZODIAC:

AN ARTIST'S ALMANAC OF ENGLISH SOCIETY

LONDON [illegible]

AUGUST [illegible]

A REG[illegible]

[illegible]

CHAPTER I.

[illegible] St. Hilary's [illegible]

[illegible]

'Sentry! [illegible] gentleman.

'Sentry! [illegible] cried a [illegible] which he recognised as a certain [illegible] Captain Tourney, [illegible] well-to-do list of [illegible], who was old enough to have known better, and if that doesn't fetch him, [illegible] the door in.'

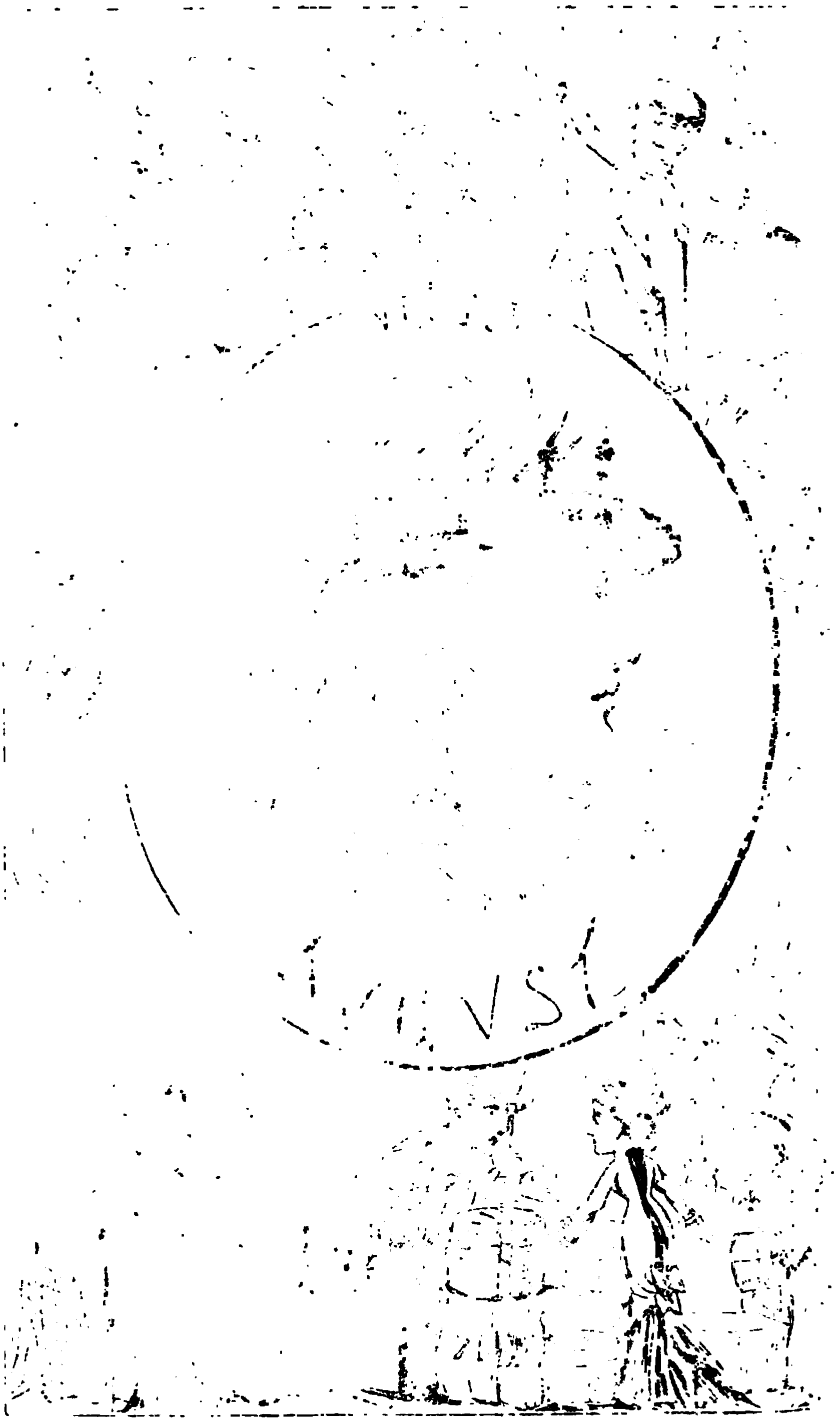
'Ha, ha, ha!' laughed a chorus of voices, under cover of which the intended victim beat a retreat.

'Sentry! [illegible] Ah, thank you, Captain Tourney,' he exclaimed, when he had reached the shelter of his own [illegible]: 'forewarned is forearmed, and I'm [illegible] this time.'

Hastily [illegible] his mattress [illegible]

[illegible] the very first thing in the morning [illegible]. Fortunately for his brother officers Gerard St. Hilary had a peculiarity. After two A.M. he could not keep his eyes [illegible] was glad to make any [illegible] which would leave [illegible]

It was invariably [illegible] Lieutenant St. [illegible] glad as likely [illegible]



THE MONTH ZOAR.

A WORK ALLEGORICAL OF ENGLISH LIFE

LONDON SOCIETY.

AUGUST 1877.

A REGIMENTAL MARTYR;

Or how Gerard St. Hilary was driven into Matrimony.

CHAPTER I.

'MAKE hay in St. Hilary's room to-night.'

Lieutenant Gerard St. Hilary came leisurely down the broad corridor and staircase of the officers' quarters in the cavalry barracks at Milchester, and crossed the passage leading to the anteroom. As he turned the handle of the door a fragment of the conversation within fell upon his ear—'*Make hay in St. Hilary's room to-night.*'

'The deuce!' ejaculated that young gentleman.

'Sentry-box him first,' cried a voice, which he recognised as Captain Gurney's, a man well up the list of captains, who was old enough to have known better, 'and if that doesn't fetch him, hammer the door in.'

'Ha, ha, ha!' laughed a chorus of voices, under cover of which the intended victim beat a retreat.

'Sentry-box me! Ah, thank you, Captain Gurney,' he exclaimed, when he had reached the shelter of his own room; 'forewarned is forearmed, and I'm on my guard this time.'

Hastily changing his undress for mufti, Mr. St. Hilary made the best of his way out of barracks, going in the direction of Milchester.

The regiment of which he was the butt-in-chief for practical jokes was the 52d Dragoons of famous Crimean memory. Perhaps his unfailing good temper made him more subject to this form of wit than would have been the case if he had borne malice and sulked.

An outsider would, perhaps, say, Why did not he report the offenders, and so secure peace? Any one with the least knowledge of regimental life could tell such a one that for a subaltern to adopt such a course would simply be to limit his career in the army to a very short period. Of course during the process he blustered a good deal, and frequently threatened to tell the chief all about it the very first thing in the morning. Fortunately for his brother officers Gerard St. Hilary had a peculiarity. After two A.M. he could not keep his eyes open, and was glad to make any bargain which would leave him in peace.

It was invariably the same; Lieutenant St. Hilary, lightly clad, as likely as not soaked with

water, standing in the centre of a group of excited comrades in mess-dress, expressing his determination 'to have no more of this foolery, by Jove.'

'Go it, Jerry; pile it up, my boy!' one would cry, amidst the jeers of the bystanders.

'I'm surprised at you, D'Albert,' poor Jerry would cry, in disgust. 'I'll report you in the morning, upon my soul I will, though you are a captain.'

Small heed did the 52d take of these awful threats. Was not the end unchanging? Presently St. Hilary would begin to shiver; then Sleep would come dropping her grains of sand into Gerard's blue eyes, and his comrades knew that then was their time.

'Now, Jerry, old man, if you forgive us, you shall go to bed.'

'Well, let me be quiet,' was poor Jerry's answer (it was always the same), 'and I'll say no more about it.'

The gratitude of the rioters was generally shown on these occasions by the careful way in which they tucked Gerard up in bed and reduced his room to something like order. Alas, only something! Order generally took days and a visit to the upholsterer's to effect, with much groaning from Jerry's man on the subject of what he called 'them idjiots.'

Poor Gerard had undergone every possible form of practical joking, and he was become a little tired of it; the trodden worm will turn, and he was thoroughly determined to put a stop to it once for all, though it must be owned he didn't quite know how to set about it.

However, enough on that head. I will just explain what is meant by 'sentry-boxing' and 'making hay,' and then go on with my story.

The doors of an officer's rooms are usually made of strong material, the hammering in of which is a long process; in order, therefore, to draw the victim from his lair without his suspecting mischief they knock at his door, and tell him the colonel or the major wants him at once, or cry 'Fire!' at the other end of the corridor. If this succeeds, well and good; but on gala nights the sentry-box is brought into play. It is placed close against the victim's door, after the manner of a trap, so that when he comes out he may go crash against the back of the box. I need not add that the more bruised and angry he is the better pleased his comrades are.

Making hay is simply breaking or turning topsy-turvy everything the intruders can lay their hands upon.

The cavalry barracks at Milchester are about a mile from the town, which is a cathedral city, chiefly noted for the beauty of its young ladies and the good tone of its society.

In common with most cathedral towns Milchester is just a little dull. In summer the croquet and lawn-tennis club, and in winter the rink, are the principal places of amusement. To the latter Mr. St. Hilary made his way, it being, when my story opens, the dreary month of November. It was an 'off' day. Had the bonny dappled hounds been after their little red-coated friend, Captain Gurney would probably have come in too tired and stiff to think of anything beyond his dinner and his bed; but there was no meet that day, and thus we have a striking instance of what Satan finds for idle hands, which is not, I trust, too severe a reflection on the gentlemen of her Majesty's army.

It was three o'clock; the rink was full, and a crowd of well-dressed skaters were gliding along

to the strains of 'Gerleibt und Verloren' waltz. Gliding, did I say? Well, some were gliding, but others were shuffling, and many were clinging ignominiously to the iron railing along the wall, while some more courageous ones were trying manfully to pretend that the bumps and falls they got did not hurt at all, and were in fact rather agreeable than otherwise.

Gerard got his skates on with all speed, and quickly made his way up and down the gay throng, as though seeking for some particular individual. He was evidently a great favourite with the fair sex, for wherever he went he was greeted with smiles and other little pleasantries. Tall, short, fair, or dark, all seemed equally pleased to see him. There were girls in blue and girls in green, in sealskin and sable, in rink hats and Gainsboroughs; and for each and all he had a bright word or compliment, but he lingered with none.

He did not find the object of his search very readily, for he was a trifle short-sighted, and, as I know from experience, the wearing of an eye-glass confines one's sight to the space immediately in front.

At last his patience was rewarded; wheeling round in great circles came a young lady, who attracted the attention and admiration of all. She was not very tall, rather under than over the middle height, with a graceful figure and carriage, delicate little hands and feet, and a small *mignon* face, of which the nose was just a wee bit up-turned, and the eyes were brilliant gleaming hazel. Her hair, which was extremely abundant, was twisted round her small shapely head in massive coils, and was of the deepest auburn hue. She was dressed in a rinking costume of prune-coloured serge, and her hat was of the same material. Her waist and throat were clasped by heavy silver belt and necklet.

The name of this young lady was Elinor Warwick. Her father held the appointment of deputy-assistant commissary-general. She lived on the same side of the town as the barracks were situated, and was, as was natural from her father's position, on very intimate terms with both the cavalry and infantry officers stationed in Milchester.

The preference was, however, given to the former, and Mr. St. Hilary enjoyed the distinction of being Miss Warwick's slave-in-chief. Poor Gerard, slave-in-chief and butt-in-chief! Not an enviable fate; but the former office he would not have delegated for any consideration, while words will not express Mr. St. Hilary's feelings on the subject of the latter.

It was a remarkable fact that, although ladies never could see anything in Miss Warwick, 'a little pert snub-nosed thing,' she always had three or four men 'in tow.' On that afternoon she had a cavalier on either side, while one or two others made up the rear. As she said herself, 'The clumsy fellows could never get out of the way; it was just like skating with outriders.'

Gerard went up, his blue eyes ablaze, and skated alongside of her for some distance, to the intense disgust of the man he had supplanted. Miss Elinor had, however, no intention of allowing him to remain there. Her way of showing him favour was by ill-using him, yet giving him certain small liberties which she did not accord to the men she took the most pains to please. One man would say to another when she was ordering Gerard

about, 'I would not stand that; what a big duffer the fellow is!'

But Gerard would not have exchanged the sweet familiarity of his intercourse with Elinor for all the civil speeches in the world; in fact it was a case of 'Betty know'd her man.'

'You're coming to our ball, Miss Warwick?' asked he.

'O, yes, of course,' she answered, in a quick clear voice.

'How many am I to have?' pleadingly.

'I really don't know. How many do you want?'

'Every one.'

'Well, but you can't have them. I'll give you one quadrille if you like, the third.'

'And four waltzes besides?'

'No,' very decisively. 'I'll give you three, if you will make yourself generally useful and agreeable this afternoon; do your duty like a man, you know.'

'May I walk home with you?'

'Well—yes.'

'I won't do it for three,' announced he, leaning forward with a dangerous look in his blue eyes.

'Four, then,' said Elinor, in rather a frightened tone.

'*And* supper.'

'Now, Mr. St. Hilary, you're asking too much. It's not in reason.'

'And supper,' repeated our hero firmly, 'or I'll not stir an inch.'

'Well, go away.'

Away he went, having learned a soldier's first lesson thoroughly. He managed to keep Miss Warwick in sight, and when she disappeared to be divested of her skates he followed in time to help her into a huge fawn-coloured Ulster, which, as the inhabitants of Milchester remarked, 'no one but Miss Warwick would have the courage to wear.'

As the two walked home together through the dreary November fog, Elinor became aware that something was amiss with her companion. More than once he sighed dolefully, and was altogether so different from the Gerard St. Hilary whose jolly laugh was heard every two minutes, that she was completely puzzled.

'Whatever is the matter, Mr. St. Hilary?' she said, at last.

'O,' moaned Gerard, with another long sigh, 'I've got such a dose before me to-night.'

'A dose?'

'Yes; the fellows are going to make hay in my room to-night.'

'Make hay!' repeated Elinor, in a tone of real surprise. 'What, in *November?*'

Then Gerard told her what he had heard, and described the process.

'I assure you, Miss Warwick,' he said, shaking his head solemnly, 'that by this time to-morrow everything in my room will be smashed to bits.'

'What a shame!' cried Elinor warmly. 'If I were you I'd try—'

'What?'

She reached up to her companion's ear, and whispered a few words to him; he burst into a roar of laughter.

'By Jove, what a brick you are!' he cried, forgetting his manners. 'I never heard such a splendid idea in all my life. Gad, what a clever girl you must be!'

'It's quite original,' she responded saucily.

'It's absolutely perfect,' replied Gerard, 'and worthy of you in every way. How they will hop to-night!'

Elinor's musical treble joined his deeper laugh; and as she parted from him at the gate of her father's house, she turned back, and said impressively,

'Mind it's white, and don't stint the quantity.'

'All right,' answered Gerard; 'I'll get plenty.'

He did not go into the barracks, but walked past them straight into Milchester, meeting on his way several of the officers returning to dinner. He evaded all their inquiries and offers to go back with him, and went on his way alone. He stopped at the first tinner's shop he came to, and purchased the largest flour-dredger they had. This he took with him, in spite of the shopman's entreaties to be allowed to send it. He next went to a general dealer's, and made another purchase, which he put into his pocket with much care, and as though he were very much afraid the paper might burst. What could it be?

Lieutenant St. Hilary went to mess that night with a face as innocent as that of a little child.

'Well, Jerry, my boy,' quoth Captain Gurney, 'what have you been doing to-day?'

Gerard looked at his superior sideways. He would have known what this display of affectionate interest meant without any previous warning.

'Rink,' answered he, with laconic laziness.

'Was the lovely Elinor there?'

'Yes.'

'Did you see her home?'

'Of course.'

'Have tea there?'

'No; I had some shopping to do,' with a little grin at the remembrance of that same shopping. 'I'm downright done up. Tell you what it is: rinking is fifty times harder work than hunting. I shall turn in early to-night, to be fit for to-morrow,' with another small grin at the look of intelligence which passed round the room. 'Are any of you fellows going to the theatre to-night? They're having *Caste*.'

'Yes,' answered Gurney; 'but I can't go. I've promised to go in and see old Patterson to-night; so I'm on duty.'

'On duty,' thought Gerard; 'on duty with a sentry-box.'

After this the conversation was on general topics; and soon after eleven o'clock Gerard, with many yawns, departed, ostensibly to bed. To that haven of rest, however, he did not go, but, piling up his fire, threw himself into an easy-chair, and quietly bided his time.

He had not long to wait; for presently he heard the sound of men treading lightly in their stockings. Thereupon he carefully snored, so as to make them believe he was safe in the arms of Morpheus.

'He's fast asleep,' he heard Middleton say.

'Then fetch it, and be quick,' was the answer.

As noiselessly as possible the heavy sentry-box was brought up and placed against his door. Then the officers, retreating, went laughing, and with much joking and bear-fighting, to their different rooms, shutting the doors with good hearty bangs, which seemed to indicate retirement for the night.

In a few moments a sharp knocking began at Gerard's door.

'Hallo!' bawled he, in a sleepy voice; 'who's there?'

'Please, sir, the Colonel wants you at once. There's something wrong with B troop, sir.'

B troop was Gerard's.

'Tell the Colonel to go and be hanged,' was Gerard's unceremonious answer.

'I daren't, sir,' was the reply.

'You daren't! Then go and be hanged yourself! This fish don't bite.'

'He twigs it!' shouted Middleton. 'Come out, you beggar, or we'll stove the door in!'

'Stove away, old man!' laughed Gerard, rising, and taking his flour-

dredger to within a yard of the door.

'Come on!' yelled Gurney's voice. 'Yeave ho, push with a will, boys; nothing like hay-making!'

Gerard waited till they were all exerting their strength to the uttermost; then flung open the door, showering the contents of the flour-dredger upon them as they tumbled headlong into the room.

'Ah!' (sneeze.)

'Ugh!' (sneeze.)

'Brute!' (sneeze, sneeze.)

'I'll pay you out for this!' gasped Gurney, shaking his fist at Gerard, while the tears ran down his face.

'Will you!' laughed Gerard, sending another shower full into his face; 'then take that, and that, and that, and make hay elsewhere, confound you! I'm about sick of this game;' as he spoke keeping up a continual shower upon the intruders.

Raving, swearing, spitting, sneezing, choking, and stamping, the crestfallen officers made the best of their way down the corridor in all the ignominy of utter defeat. From head to feet they were covered with the strongest white pepper, the embroidery on their mess-jackets forming grand receptacles for the frightful powder. Their hair, eyes, noses, mouths, and moustaches were all filled with it, and it was hours before the terrible sneezing and choking subsided. So thoroughly was it scattered over each practical joker, that for several days the opening of a door or window would send a fresh waft of it across the anteroom or dinner-table, to the intense disgust of the more peaceably-disposed members, who were loud in their demands that for the future St. Hilary should be left in peace.

In peace, however, Gerard St. Hilary was not allowed to remain. On making his appearance in the mess-room the morning following the *feu du poivre*, he was greeted with a volley of forage-caps, newspapers, and other small missiles of a similar character.

He came into the room with a jolly laugh, his blue eyes shining with merriment, and looking, in his well got-up hunting costume, as he always did look, 'thoroughbred.'

'Expect a good run this morning, Gurney?' he began, as he sat down, 'or is your cold too bad?'

'My cold?' said that gentleman interrogatively.

'Yes. I heard a good deal of sneezing in my vicinity last night.'

'Ah, you rascal,' cried Gurney, laughing in spite of himself; 'we are going to pay you out for that fine trick.'

'By Jove, how you did sneeze!' cried Gerard, with shrieks of laughter. 'This was it, Major: "Ugh!" (sneeze); "Ah!" (sneeze); "Brute!" (choke); "I'll pay you out for this!" (sneeze, choke, choke, sneeze.) Gad, it was fine!'

'Serve them right,' growled the Major; 'they'll let you alone now, St. Hilary.'

'Will we!' cried a chorus of voices; 'don't flatter yourself, Jerry.'

At this moment another officer in 'pink' entered the room, and seated himself next to St. Hilary.

''Pon my soul, Jerry,' he began, 'but that was a scurvy trick you played us last night. I can't get your confounded pepper out of my moustaches.'

'That's awkward for you, Jack,' laughed Gerard. 'It's my idea that when fellows get engaged to be married they should leave their neighbours in peace.'

'Perhaps you're right,' answered

A REGIMENTAL MARTYR.

See page 102.

Jack Hilton. 'Anyhow, I left my man cursing you after the fashion of Rheims; but, unlike the little Jackdaw, you seem to flourish under it amazingly.'

'I had an uncommonly good night; and you'd better tell your man that "curses, like chickens, come home to roost."'

'I think his come home to him with every shake of my clothes or movement of his brush,' cried Hilton, laughing.

'Ha, ha, ha!' screamed Gerard, in high glee. 'Well, I must be off. Are you coming, Jack?'

At the door he turned back to fire a parting shot.

'I hope on my return, my dear fellows, to find that the influenza is somewhat improved.'

'You were a big fool too, Jerry,' said Jack Hilton gravely, as the two rode through the soft November fog. 'I never saw any fellow in such a rage as Gurney was in last night—never in all my life. He swore he would be revenged on you; take my word for it he will. They're going to fill your bed with beetles to-night.'

'That's pleasant,' said Gerard grimly. 'However, you are a good fellow to tell me. And now let us talk of something else; what's done cannot be undone, and I suppose I must grin and bear it.'

They found the meet that day but very poorly attended. There was only one lady present. Of course that one was Elinor Warwick.

'Well,' she inquired eagerly, as Gerard rode up, 'how did it answer?'

'O, if you'd only been there!' cried Gerard, giving her a graphic description of the stampede; but ending with, 'I hear from Hilton that I am to suffer a perfect martyrdom of retaliation.'

'Poor thing!' said Elinor softly; whereupon Gerard forgot all his troubles, and only remembered that, whatever happened, he would be sure of Elinor's loving pity and commiseration.

The word which he had used to Elinor Warwick in jest was realised by him in all its stern hideousness. A martyr he in very truth became. It seemed as if his tormentors could neither forget nor forgive the *feu du poivre*. They no longer dared disturb him at night—their fear of his pepper-pot was too wholesome; but by every other means in their power did they worry and annoy him. His bed was, as Jack Hilton had predicted, filled with cockroaches; and this course was followed up by frogs, dead mice, fender and fire-irons, plentiful administration of lard and wet sponges. His boots were filled with burrs or cobbler's wax, and, in fact, his life was made a burden to him. On the day of the ball, however, matters came to a climax.

CHAPTER II.

It was a fortnight after the *feu du poivre*. The officers had tried their best to get Gerard made 'orderly' on that day, but failed; and whilst he was down at the rink with Miss Warwick, set their wits to work to devise some new form of torture. They went to the Colonel, and asked as a great favour that dressing for mess might be excused, on the plea that it would be a great nuisance to dress twice, and their full dress was very inconvenient to dine in on account of the heat.

'You see, Colonel,' said they, 'we shall be obliged to dance all night, and we want to begin as cool as possible.'

With a slight demur the Colonel consented, and then they knew that their trick was safe.

Gerard went in rather late, and on hearing that dressing was excused, went to dinner without going near his rooms. At nine o'clock one of the mess-waiters came behind his chair, and whispered that his man wanted him at once.

From the sudden 'hush' in the room poor Gerard suspected mischief. His man was awaiting him at the door with an anxious face.

'What's the matter?' demanded Gerard.

'O, sir,' exclaimed he, 'I hardly dare tell you.'

Gerard dashed up to his room, and there on the bed lay his full-dress and mess jackets, with every seam neatly ripped up. Going to the ball was out of the question; etiquette would not permit him to go in ordinary evening attire.

'Don't look like that, sir,' said Jones, in an imploring tone—for Gerard had never uttered one word, but stood gazing on the wreck of his property, growing whiter and whiter every moment—'don't look like that; I've sent for the master tailor. I should think he will be able to get them sewn up in something like time.'

In a few minutes that functionary arrived, but could not promise that the work should be complete before midnight. For three weary hours did Gerard pace his room, giving no answer to the various knocks from the men who wanted to know how their trick had succeeded.

Soon after midnight Gerard was in a cab, driving as fast as possible to the assembly rooms, where the ball was given. Colonel Vane, with whom he was a great favourite, was standing near the door when he passed in.

'Well, my boy,' he said kindly, 'you are very late.'

'Yes, sir, I am rather,' answered Gerard, his voice shaking still.

'Why, what's the matter, St. Hilary? you are very white. Are you not well?'

'Yes, thanks, Colonel;' and Gerard passed on.

Now Gerard was engaged to Miss Warwick for the first, fifth, tenth, and sixteenth dances. The tenth, he very well knew, was the supper waltz. He found that the ninth was then being danced; so, after all, though he had missed two dances with her, he was not so very badly off.

He hung about looking for her, and at last saw her bright chestnut hair in very close proximity to Captain Gurney's scarlet-clad shoulder. Gerard's blue eyes flashed at the sight, for Gurney was not a favourite of Elinor's; yet here she was sitting in an out-of-the-way corner, flirting desperately with the man who had done his best to prevent his coming to the ball.

He waited impatiently for the dance to end, that he might claim Miss Warwick for the waltz, and meanwhile amused himself by studying her face and dress, which was of white silk, unrelieved by any colour. Her hair was plaited in a long braid, and hung far below her waist; and nestling in it were two white roses, placed just at the top of the braid behind the left ear. She wore no ornaments whatever; and the only speck of colour she had about her was a large bouquet of crimson and white flowers which Gerard had sent her. His foolish heart throbbed at the sight of it; but it sank to zero when she raised her face, and he saw that it was as white as her dress, and that she had, what he had never seen there before, a hard glittering look in her gleaming hazel eyes.

At last the dance was ended, and the instant the signal sounded for the next one Gerard crossed

the room, and, bending his arm to Elinor, said,

'My dance, I believe.'

'I have given your dances away,' said Miss Warwick coolly. 'I sat out the two best waltzes of the evening waiting for you, and you really must forgive me if I did not care to waste any more.' And taking Captain Gurney's arm, she swept away.

Gerard was thunderstruck. He stood for a moment speechless with rage and astonishment. This was a catastrophe he had never bargained for. No, poor fellow; he had expected to receive at Elinor's hands sweetest pity and commiseration. He determined not to leave the room without an attempt at an explanation; so he followed them, and began gently,

'Will you not let me explain?'

But Elinor was too thoroughly angry to listen to reason, and she faced him haughtily.

'Thank you, Mr. St. Hilary, that is quite unnecessary. I assure you it is not of the slightest consequence.'

With a frigid little bow she passed away, leaving Gerard with anything but a pleasant expression on his usually pleasant face. He stood and watched them go down the room; he saw Captain Gurney bend towards her, as though he were saying something especially tender; and the sight of that, and the sound of the light laugh with which Elinor answered it, were more than he could bear. He rushed out of the room, and entering the first cab, ordered the man to drive as quickly as possible back to barracks.

'Tell you what, George,' said one of his tormentors to another, 'I wish I was well out of this joke; that fellow will go mad.'

'Umph! Gurney is such a beggar for running an idea to death.'

Gerard reached his room in a state of misery too intense for words. He felt sick and dizzy, and was thankful that for once his bed had been left in decent order. Sleep, however, he could not. He tossed about to and fro; his bed was hot and uncomfortable; and first one and then another of his comrades disturbed him by coming along the corridor with clanking of spurred boots.

At last he sank into a troubled fretful doze, which lasted until Jones came to wake him at six o'clock, for he was orderly-officer that day. When the gas was lighted, what Gerard in his agony called 'the fiendishness of the plot' was revealed: from head to foot he was as white as any miller.

His man begged him not to have his usual bath, but be rubbed down with coarse towels as quickly as possible.

'If you get into water, sir,' he entreated, 'it will all turn to paste. I'll rub it off in a few minutes.'

'You'll have to be uncommonly quick,' said St. Hilary grimly; 'for I must be off in ten minutes.'

Jones rubbed and scrubbed with a will, until Gerard was quite clean and presentable, except on one point. That point showed itself with painful obtrusiveness: it was his hair. That, and his particularly long yellow moustache, were as white as the driven snow. Jones got a couple of big brushes, and worked hard; but though a tremendous cloud of the treacherous white powder came off, no perceptible difference was made in Lieutenant St. Hilary's appearance.

'I don't know what to do, sir,' said he at length, with a great sigh.

At this moment a knock was heard at the door.

'Come in,' roared Gerard.

'Stables, sir,' announced an orderly; 'the adjutant's out, sir, already.'

This was the last ounce on the camel's back.

'Good heavens!' gasped Gerard. 'Ask him to come up here.'

Presently the adjutant came up, amazed at the unusual request.

'Just look here, Harrington,' said Gerard, displaying his whitened hair; 'see what those brutes have done. I can't come into sight like this.'

'Certainly not,' answered he promptly. 'I'll tell Hilton to do your duty.'

'And I say, Harrington, don't peach, there's a good chap.'

Mr. Harrington, a 'gentleman adjutant,' was a married man, and did not approve of the pranks which were carried to such excess amongst the officers of the 52d Dragoons. So he departed without vouchsafing any reply to Gerard's continued entreaties.

He breakfasted alone, and soon after ten o'clock the Colonel sent for him to the orderly-room.

'What's the meaning of this, St. Hilary?' began the chief sternly.

'I couldn't go on duty like this, sir,' said poor Gerard deprecatingly.

'What in the world—' began the Colonel, suddenly breaking off into roars of laughter, as his eyes fell upon Gerard in all the freshness of a hoary old age. Then recovering himself, said stiffly, 'This should have been reported to me at once.'

'Please, sir,' said Gerard, 'I've been trying to get it out.'

Again the Colonel was afflicted with a sudden convulsive choking, something between a cough and a sneeze.

'Well, you had better report it now.'

'I don't know who did it, sir,' was the reply.

'My good fellow,' said his chief, 'I admire your principles immensely, but you don't expect me to believe that you could be covered with flour from head to foot without knowing who did it?'

'Yes, sir,' answered Gerard, laughing, 'for they filled my bed.'

'With flour?' said the Colonel incredulously.

'I don't think it is flour, Colonel; it's scented, and I think it's complexion stuff, and that, you know, is made to stick on.'

'Umph! Well, you are excused duty to-day; go away.' And Gerard went.

After another brushing by Jones he went to luncheon with as unconcerned a face as he could put on, and for a few moments no one took any notice of him.

Presently, however, Captain Gurney left his seat, and, coming behind him, took a leisurely survey of his still whitened locks.

'What have you been doing with yourself, my boy? Have you been acting in private theatricals, or are you going to the *bal masqué* or the rink to-night?'

Gerard answered never a word; and with another attempt at chaff, Captain Gurney retired to his seat.

'I should advise you to let that fellow alone, Gurney,' said the surgeon-major, next to whom he was sitting; 'the chief's awfully keen about it, and St. Hilary had some difficulty to prevent peaching.'

'O, Jerry 'd never peach,' said he carelessly.

'I don't know; but apart from that you are knocking the poor lad's health up.'

'The poor lad's four-and-twenty,' laughed Gurney, with a sneer.

'He cannot stand having his rest broken, and you must stop

it,' said the surgeon decisively. 'If anything more of this kind occurs I shall report immediately. I won't stand by and see any fellow's health tampered with, and this persecution has gone on beyond all bounds.'

Gerard St. Hilary sat throughout the meal in dignified silence, and presently his dog-cart with his high-stepping roan mare was brought round, and he drove away in the direction of Elinor Warwick's house.

That young lady's anger had cooled down during the night, and she was repenting very bitterly her unkindness of the previous evening. She told herself that she ought to have listened to his excuses. If, as Captain Gurney had hinted, he had purposely avoided dancing the two first dances with her, why had he come for the supper waltz of all others? He would never ask her to make friends again, and she had thrown away her life's happiness at the instigation of a man she thoroughly disliked and despised. Poor Elinor! She did not realise, till she thought she had lost him, how very dear the six-foot, yellow-haired, blue-eyed Dragoon had grown to her!

She sat alone in her pretty drawing-room—alas, that she had no mother to share it with her!—and wondered, with a dull aching at her heart, whether all those happy days were past and gone, never to return.

She heard a carriage drive up to the door, but so little did she expect Gerard that, when he was ushered into the room, she uttered a low cry of surprise and joy, and went with outstretched hands to greet him.

'So you have forgiven me?' said Gerard, forgetting all his sorrows at the sight of her tender hazel eyes.

Elinor hung her head, the painful blushes coming thick and fast.

'I was very rude last night, and unkind, but I thought—' she stammered.

'You thought what?' said Gerard eagerly.

'I—I thought you did not care to dance so many times with me, for Captain Gurney said you were lounging about your rooms doing nothing.'

'Curse him!' muttered Gerard under his breath. 'So you thought I had forgotten you, did you, darling? And if I had would you have minded much?'

Elinor did not speak; and, strange to say, Gerard did not notice the omission, for he established her in a low chair in front of the blazing fire, and, bending over her, said, in a dangerously gentle voice,

'My child, you were very cruel to me last night; nothing else than the cause which kept me away could have held me from your side.'

Then he told her all his troubles, and showed her his still whitened hair, which, in her agitation, she had not noticed. Poor Elinor was in an agony of confusion and regret.

'Can you ever forgive me?' she murmured.

'Yes, my love, on one condition—that, as a penance for your sins, you give me your darling self.'

'That will be a curious penance,' said Elinor, looking upwards lovingly. 'No penance at all.'

'Don't be too sure. I shall be horribly jealous, and exacting to a degree. I shall not allow any flirting, and shall probably make your life a burden to you.'

'I shall not want to flirt,' whispered Elinor.

'Won't you, my darling? Will your great, stupid, lumbering husband content you?'

Elinor thought he would—she thinks so still.

Amongst the regimental plate of the 52d is a large golden pepper-pot, encrusted with jewels, and the date engraved thereon is that of Gerard St. Hilary's wedding. It was given by Elinor's wish in remembrance of the regimental martyrdom which had gained for her the truest heart that ever beat, though her husband frequently assures her that he had made up his mind ages before, so that it only hastened matters by a few weeks.

RIVER RHYMES.

No. I. PEARL.

A Lazy Lyric.

I.

PEARL, O Pearl!
Naught but a lissome English girl,
So sweet and simple;
Naught but the charm of golden curl,
Of blush and dimple—
Pearl, O Pearl!

II.

Sweet, ah, sweet!
'Tis pleasant lolling at your feet,
In summer playtime;
Ah, how the moments quickly fleet
In sunny hay-time—
Sweet, ah, sweet!

III.

Dream, ah, dream!
The sedges sing by swirling stream
A lovely brief song;
The poplars chant in sunny gleam
A lulling leaf-song—
Dream, ah, dream!

IV.

Stay, O stay!
We cannot dream all through the day,
Demure and doubtful;
When shines the sun we must make hay,
When lips are poutful—
Stay, O stay!

J. ASHBY-STERRY.

AN OCEAN RACE.

A Yachtsman's Story.

'Do not let me hear anything about it,' said the Consul, laughing, 'or I shall be obliged to notice officially such a breach of neutrality by a British subject. Despatches are about the worst kind of contraband, and—'

Here he was interrupted by Madame Delconi, who said, with a flash of her dark eyes, 'I am sure you will not consider that at all if you can do my country a service. Such laws are only made for those cold hearts that can never sympathise with the wrongs of other nations.'

'And what can I say, who have put you into this dilemma? If my little vessel had not struck on the Via Mala yesterday, I should now be half way to our fleet with the instructions to the Admiral. Now her white wings are broken, and we are lost, unless an English yacht takes compassion on us. Except your little Caradoc, there is no vessel within a hundred kilometres that is fit for the voyage. It will not be the first time that we owe a debt of gratitude to her flag.'

This came from the sentimental captain, who had just lost his ship on the bar outside the harbour, partly through bad seamanship, and partly because all the lights and buoys had been taken up since the beginning of the war.

'Never mind these heroics,' exclaimed the Consul impatiently to me; 'if you like the job, I really don't see why you shouldn't undertake it. Of course, I won't mention it at the Foreign Office, though I don't suppose it would matter the least to you if I did. The worst that can happen to you is the loss of your yacht, and perhaps a few days' detention at Trieste or Fiume while she is before the Prize Court. But I must beg of you not to implicate me in it, or I might get recalled and sent out to one of the new vice-consulates in Asia Minor. Corali is a fool, or he would never have lost his ship in such a clear night. Why, I could have taken her in myself! I've known him a long time, and I am sure that if he would only read less poetry he would make a better seaman. I expect in a month or two to hear that he has written a poem on the shipwreck. These Italians ought not to be trusted alone on the sea.'

The Consul was a man who liked every one to know that his talents were spread over a wide range. Nothing annoyed him more than the idea (which he always did his best to destroy) that he was of no use in the world but in his capacity of British consul. He was always airing his amateur knowledge of navigation, military drill, seamanship, civil engineering, and other subjects, and often inflicted a willing snub upon himself as consul. He was prouder of this superficial knowledge (which was often worse than useless to himself and his friends) than of his professional attainments, which were considerable.

After three months' yachting in the Mediterranean, I went into the Adriatic on my way home through Austria and Germany. A few days after entering Italian waters the war between Italy and Austria

broke out. I did not wish to give up my plan of reaching either Venice or Trieste in the yacht. A south-easterly gale compelled us to take shelter in Fiora, a little port north of the gulf of Manfredonia. It was hardly better than a fishing village; but there was a safe anchorage under the lee of the headland which lay to the south of the town. The place was not so dull as it might have been under other circumstances. Many of the residents of Ancona had gone there in consequence of the war, as it was not improbable that Ancona might be bombarded by the Austrian fleet. The British consul at Leghorn had a villa at Fiora, which was for a time the centre of the society of the town.

The house was built on a rocky hill, close to the winding road to Ancona. From the terrace beyond the garden you could almost drop a stone into the tideless waters below. How often we used to sit on the benches under the oranges and myrtles, and watch the stars rising out of the sea in the east! How often we gazed at the rich contrast of colours on the sea and the land in the morning—the white sail on the ocean, the faint blue hills in the distance, the vineyards and maize-fields! We could hear the village girls chanting their choruses in the evening after sunset, the Ave Maria bells from the chapel in the monastery close by the seashore, and the plaintive whispering every now and then of the almost motionless ocean at our feet. Faint voices from the beach when the fishermen were bringing in their boats, the lizard rustling in the bank, the plash of the fountain, were the only sounds that broke the stillness of those summer nights. Sometimes we rowed round the point in the evening, and kept time with our oars to the songs we sang; sometimes we strayed in the woods till no light was left but that of the stars to guide us home.

The Consul had been an old friend of my father's, and while I was at Fiora most of my time was spent at his house; and this was an after-dinner conversation one evening on the terrace. Captain Corali commanded an *aviso* attached to the Italian fleet, which was at that time cruising off the Austrian coast. He had been sent to Fiora to fetch despatches for the admiral, but had lost his vessel in trying to enter the harbour at night. As the despatches were of great importance, and as there was no other suitable vessel within reach, he had asked me to take them over in my yacht.

Of Madame Delconi I need say but little. Our paths ran side by side for a few weeks, and then separated for ever. She was handsome, a thorough woman of the world, and an ardent patriot. No one could doubt the sincerity of her love for her country, but for the sake of Italy she could be insincere in everything else. She would use her power over men to make them help her country in any way that lay within their reach; but when they had done what they could, and she thought they could be useful no more, then she often forgot to be grateful. Perhaps I judged her harshly; but I was younger then, and full of a boy's admiration for a beautiful woman much older than himself. Her wishes alone made me undertake what Corali had failed to do, as personally I took very little interest in, and felt no enthusiasm for, Italy in her struggle with Austria. When I had done what she asked me to do, and came back to receive what I had been looking forward to so eagerly—a few graceful words of thanks—I was bitterly disappointed. But

to give her her due, I believe that her heart was so completely taken up with the politics of Italy, that there was no place for any other feeling—every thought, moment, word, and act was wasted that was not directly devoted to her country.

It was settled that I should leave Fiora the next morning before sunrise with the despatches, as it was necessary to time our departure so as to be able to get well clear of the land before daylight, an Austrian frigate having been seen several times hovering about along the coast. In another hour, Hunt, my sailing-master, had received orders to get up steam and prepare for weighing anchor an hour after midnight.

'Now you have taken such a great weight off my mind, and I can prepare for my defence before the court-martial with a light heart. If you are short-handed, I can lend you half a dozen of my poor shipwrecked children.'

I accepted this offer of Corali's, as I had only hands enough for ordinary cruising, and not for what would not improbably be an ocean race.

'You've never heard that wicked story about Corali, have you?' said the Consul, in an undertone to me (Corali was sitting some way off, talking to Madame Delconi). 'I heard it at the Casino. He was once, they say, sent out to Malta in a despatch boat. He was absent ten days or a fortnight; everybody began to fear that he had been lost, when he suddenly reappeared at Spezzia, and reported that there was no such island as Malta to be found.'

Corali then joined us, and I took his place by Madame Delconi.

'And I,' she said, 'will give you a letter of introduction to my cousin, the Admiral, and will command him to express my gratitude to you. He will welcome you indeed; but he and I and Italy will be almost jealous of the debt we owe to one who is not a countryman of ours. Ah me, if I could only make you an Italian!'

'I will become one if you will only ask me.'

'No, I will not ask you yet; I must first see what you can do for Italy. Perhaps soon I may take you at your word.'

The silence which followed was broken by the Consul, whose voice seemed to bring back her thoughts from where they had been roaming. She was gazing pensively at a little boat a mile or two out, but appeared hardly to see it: I could just hear a gentle sigh as she turned her face from it.

'If you like, I will pilot you out of the harbour to-morrow morning. I know the way out as well as that path through the woods. The only thing is whether it would be consistent with my official position. The office has just sent me orders to make a report on the war; I detest reports, and never could write a decent one, so it will be a comfort to me to turn my hand to something I feel capable of doing, before exposing myself in a meagre report on the war, which never interested me.'

Everybody smiled at this characteristic speech from the Consul.

I felt bound to refuse this embarrassing offer, and said,

'I won't run the risk of compromising you. Hunt has been sounding the passage, and he feels pretty sure of getting over safely. And Captain Corali tells me that the leading lights on the Mole will be lit for me, so I think we can manage it alone.'

'Well, well, do as you like; though I may say that no one

knows the course out better than I do.'

But next time he took his own yacht out, he lost her on the rocks in calm weather; while his report, which he felt so incapable of making, was spoken of in Parliament as 'the lucid and exhaustive account of the causes and events of the war, written by our energetic Consul at Leghorn.'

So the letters were given to me by Corali. I was young enough to be enchanted with such a romantic adventure. A handsome woman had sent me on an errand that might end in the capture of the yacht by an Austrian cruiser, and possibly in imprisonment for myself. But whatever might happen, I felt sure of a sufficient reward in the kind thoughts that she would feel for her boy-admirer, who had done what she wished him to do. I pictured her to myself resting under the orange-trees next day, and perhaps bestowing a thought or a sigh on me, who might at that moment be the target for a frigate's broadside. I felt that I was going to bring back the old days of chivalry and knight-errantry. I was only just twenty, and what would that age be without such pleasant empty little romances?

Then they drank my health in the sweet wines of Cyprus and Corinth, and wished me *bon voyage.* I had a few words alone with Madame Delconi, and begged for a little Indian charm she had been playing with, and which she said would protect whoever had it from all harm. She gave it me, saying,

'I do not give it you. I only lend it; you must bring it back to me when you can. And now,' she added, in a lower tone, 'what can I do to show you my gratitude for what you are going to do for Italy? Will you give me some little task—I will try so hard to do it well while you are in peril for our sakes?'

I almost asked for the flower in her hand; but even while the words were on my lips, a good angel put it into my heart to remember poor Morris, one of the yacht's crew, who had fallen from the rigging and broken his thigh. He was now in the hospital at Ancona. That very morning I had had a letter from him; he said that they were all very kind to him, but that 'I harnt herd a Blessed word of inglish Sins yer ronnor left'—he who was the life of the forecastle and the spinner of endless yarns over his grog. I told her his story, and an expression of interest came over her beautiful features.

'If only you would go and see him once or twice when you are in Ancona, and speak to him in his own language, I am sure that he will be so grateful to you. I do not wish to pay you an idle compliment; but I know how little I should care for any pain if you came to say a kind word to me now and then.'

'O, I shall be so glad to go and see him whenever I am in Ancona! What is his name? I suppose he is in that hospital at the corner of the Piazza. I know it well; I have been to see some of our wounded soldiers there. Probably I shall be going over there to-morrow. Must you go now? I will only say *au revoir*, as I hope to see you again in a week or two.' A bright smile, and she was gone. A petal from the rose in her hair had fallen to the ground; but as I stooped to pick it up, a sudden gust of wind carried it away from me.

After saying farewell to the others, I went down the hill, and found the boat from the yacht waiting for me on the beach.

The moon was about to set; the sky overhead was clear and bright with stars. Along the horizon to the south there lay a thick bank of clouds, occasionally illumined by a flash of lightning, followed by a low growl of distant thunder. The sea was perfectly calm; the images of the stars in the water hardly quivered, except where our oars had raised the ripples.

The Caradoc in her day had been one of the fastest schooners of her tonnage. I bought her at the end of the season, and had her lengthened during the winter, to make room for an engine and auxiliary screw, without decreasing her accommodation. Under steam and sail, she had often gone over fourteen knots an hour; so with a fair wind she might expect to run away from any ordinary Austrian frigate. Hunt had stowed away her cruising-sails, and had substituted her old racing-suit, which had often borne her in first past the mark-boat at Ryde. Soon after midnight steam was blowing away from the waste-pipe, and one of the engineers came and reported to me on the bridge, 'All ready below, sir.' Another five minutes and we were steaming slowly out to sea. Meantime, the clouds had covered almost all the sky; the wind was whistling through the rigging, and a long rolling swell from the south-east had sprung up. In a few minutes we had got outside the point that sheltered the harbour, and had shaped our course for the rendezvous of the fleet on the Austrian coast about one hundred and fifty miles off. Very soon the lights were extinguished, and we lost sight of the outline of the coast in the darkness. We put as much sail on the yacht as she could bear, and drove the engines at full speed—the throb of them sounded like the beating of the Caradoc's heart. We got about twelve knots out of her for the first two or three hours; but as the sea rose her speed decreased. Hunt was at the wheel, and there was a look-out on the forecastle and on each side of the bridge. The smallest member of the crew—Muz, the fox-terrier—was on his mat on the lee-side of the funnel-casing. He had come out to the Mediterranean with me while a mere puppy, and arrived in Ancona a dog without a name. There he chased and almost killed the first cat that he saw. A gendarme came up, arrested him, muttered something that sounded like *cane feroce*, and took him to the town-hall. In the end he was sentenced to wear a muzzle—a badge of infamy which had hitherto made him look down upon all dogs whom he had met abroad. For two days he tried to scratch it off with his fore-paws, and by rubbing his nose against the stones; but eventually had to succumb to *force majeure*. Then he received the name of Muz, and never left the yacht unless he was made to.

About an hour after leaving Fiora a sail was reported close ahead. 'Hard a-port! Ease off the jib and forestaysail sheets!' The Carodoc swung round, and a little fishing-boat, that in the dim light had looked almost large enough to be an Austrian frigate, passed close under our lee-quarter. The Italian sailors, lent by Corali, said that there was not much chance of our meeting the enemy so far from land. The glorious excitement of that night and of the day that followed! There was nothing that could be compared to the command of a fast schooner in half a gale of wind! A quick eye, a steady hand on the helm, and we could make all the winds and the waves obey us.

Morning came, and with it more wind and a heavier sea, which made the yacht stagger so that I had the topsails lowered, and a single reef taken-in in the foresail and mainsail.

'Well, Hunt, what do you think about it? Do you think we can run away from one of their cruisers?'

'Don't know at all, sir,' said he, with a dubious shake of the head. He had a great prejudice against steam. 'These here steamers carry such a terrible weather-helm. We'd better ease off the mainsheet a little, sir; I can't keep her on her course without jamming the helm hard up. I don't mean no offence to you or the yacht, sir; but I shouldn't like to find myself under the lee of a frigate just now.'

'Well, Hunt, we must do what we can.'

As I went away from him, I heard him muttering, 'Ah, she were a beauty!' meaning, I suppose, the Caradoc before her conversion. Finally, he relieved his feelings by ordering the look-out on the bridge to keep his eyes wider open, in forcible language.

Soon after sunrise a dense driving mist surrounded the yacht, which made everything invisible beyond a radius of a quarter of a mile. One of the men reported about an hour afterwards that he heard a ship's bell close by; but as nothing could be seen, I thought that it must have been the cry of a sea-bird or the wind. In another half-hour we had emerged from the fog, and out of it appeared about a mile off the Austrian frigate Opal under easy sail! We must have passed very close to her in the mist, and, judging from the course she was now steering, we had probably been running alongside of her for some distance. Hunt was equal to the occasion. Coming up to the bridge, he merely said, 'Strange sail right abeam, sir;' and returned to the wheel without a word.

Some minutes elapsed before she showed any signs of having seen us, which gave us time to shake out the reefs and to put the yacht on her best sailing course, with the wind about two points abaft the beam. This brought the frigate right astern. Suddenly she seemed to wake up; the men crowded into the rigging, her helm was put up, and a blank cartridge was fired to make us heave-to. By this time we had increased our lead considerably. The frigate yawed to fire a shell at us; but it burst some distance astern. We settled down for the race. I could hardly hope that we should win it; the sea was so high that the yacht had much more water to go through than her opponent, who, being ten times her size, did not rise and fall with each wave.

How exciting the first hour of the chase was! The distance between us did not seem to diminish, but we had more sail set than the masts ought to carry in such a high wind. Under steam alone we should have had no chance. Sometimes as we lay in the trough of a sea the frigate was completely hidden from us. The lee rail was close down to the water's edge, and the men, except those at the helm and the sheets, had to crouch down under the shelter of the weather bulwarks. Clouds of spray were driven over us by the screw racing when the stern was out of water.

Hunt and I were on the bridge watching the frigate through our glasses. She did not seem to bear her press of sail as well as we did, but was rolling heavily; nor did she gain much on us, but probably

her steam was very low when she sighted us.

'This is very like an ocean race from the Needles to Cherbourg, Hunt, only rather more exciting.'

'We don't get no allowance for tonnage, I am afraid, sir.'

By midday the frigate had gained upon us and was now less than a mile away. We all began to feel that most likely before sunset we should be prisoners on board the frigate, the Caradoc stolen from us, and either in the hands of a prize crew, or a blazing wreck that would light up the dark waters at midnight.

Suddenly another friendly storm of rain hid us for more than half an hour. We had been driven considerably out of our course by the frigate, so I took the opportunity of putting the Caradoc nearly close hauled on the port tack, which I had been unable to do on first sighting the frigate as she was abeam. This would give us a better chance of escape, as a fore-and-aft-rigged vessel would sail nearer to the wind than a square-rigged one. The success of this manœuvre depended mainly on the length of time we remained out of sight, and on the frigate not changing her course. When at last it cleared up, she was a mile to leeward of us sailing straight away. Hunt was quite pleased. The sea had calmed down a little now, and as soon as the frigate had rounded-to (which she did very clumsily) she fired her starboard broadside at us. Most of the shots fell wide, but one came through the rigging and made a hole in the foresail.

This was more than Muz could stand. Jumping down from his mat, he got on to a coil of rope under the bulwarks, and with his fore paws on the lee rail and his head just peering above it, he barked furiously at the frigate. When he found that he could do no good by barking into space, he returned to his mat sulkily, growling all the time.

For the rest of the day we kept our distance, and it seemed likely that we should escape, unless some mishap occurred to us. But about three the yacht's jibboom broke off, and we fell gradually into the clutches of the frigate. All was almost lost, when *her* fore topgallant mast was carried away, dragging down with it three sails. We were saved. I immediately ran up the courteous signal in the International Code, 'Farewell, a pleasant voyage.' This insulting message she answered with a broadside, which did us no harm. She hove-to to repair the wreck, and gradually sank lower and lower on the horizon, and was out of sight at sunset. Some time afterwards I heard that the fallen rigging had fouled her screw, which accounted for our getting away so easily after the accident.

We sighted the Italian fleet at daylight next morning, and in an hour were at anchor between the two divisions. A boat was sent off to the flagship with the despatches, and at noon the Admiral himself paid me a visit on board the Caradoc. I stayed three days with the fleet. Their hospitality was unbounded, and the enthusiasm with which they received us was most gratifying. The petty officers gave a grand supper to my men, while I was hardly able to spend another hour on board the Caradoc. To have successfully completed such a romantic adventure seemed to me the height of good fortune; the only thing wanting was the kind word that I felt sure of getting from Madame Delconi when I returned to Fiora.

Never again shall I feel the

pride with which I sailed through the fleet on our way back to Italy. The band of each ship played the English National Anthem, and saluted our flag hoisted at each foremast. We reached Ancona two days afterwards. I went over to see the Consul at Fiora. Madame Delconi was not there, and they told me that she had gone back to Ancona. Next day I saw her on the Piazza, talking eagerly to an Italian deputy. She bowed slightly, with the air of one who could not remember who it was she was bowing to, and walked away under the trees; I had quite passed away from her memory.

Then I went up to the hospital to ask after poor Morris. To my great grief I heard that he had died two days before. I asked if anybody had been to see him ever, but was told that no one except a priest had been near him. Madame Delconi had forgotten her promise, so eagerly given. When a little sympathy, a few pleasant words, a smile, a handful of flowers, would have done him more good than any number of physicians, she had left him to die alone, unknown, and uncared for; with no one near him who could speak to him in his own language, or hear his last words, or take his last messages. A seaman who had always done his duty, he died far away from his home, far away from the voice of his widowed mother, in the midst of strangers, who only regarded him as an interesting case in surgery.

Next day I left Ancona, and reached England early in the autumn.

CHAPTER XXII.

CASTLE ADLERBERG.

CASTLE ADLERBERG.

As to its exact geographical position, our ideas when we left Ludwigsheim were still vague and general. A morning in the railway would, we were told, bring us to the nearest station; thence, an afternoon in an *Einspänner* to the castle, which we might expect to reach towards five o'clock.

Once out of the train, and well behind the range of heights bordering the plain through which the railway runs, we found ourselves in a country as wild and picturesque as the most flowery imagination could desire. Acres and acres of forest-land, rugged hills thickly overgrown by masses of oak and beech, with a dark fringe of firs. Bright running trout-streams, banked by broken rocks green and gray with moss. We might have fancied ourselves in Wales or the Lake country, but for the maize and vines we had left behind us in the plain.

Five o'clock came, and we were still jogging leisurely along a mountain-road that followed the winding course of a little river under the brow of a hill. Suddenly, as we rounded a sharp curve, the driver, pointing upwards with his whip-handle, laconically observed,

'Schloss Adlerberg.'

Looking up we beheld the tall, broken, shapeless tower and hollow walls of an ancient, worm-eaten ruin. It seemed to spring out of the rocks overhead, on the edge of which it stood, an ivied, crumbling skeleton, white and hoar against the murky evening sky. A mere shell or husk—a dwelling for the stork.

'Schloss Adlerberg!' repeated Eva, aghast. For a moment we thought that we or the castle were bewitched.

'Yes, the *alte Schloss*,' he explained. 'The other, the new, we shall see presently, as we turn the next corner.'

Almost as he spoke we came in sight of it—a large showy building in the prime of life, admirably situated on the heights about half a mile beyond the ruin. The front was flanked by two round towers, and the foreground was turfed over, and bordered by a broad terrace looking down on the river.

There was no drive up through the garden to the front door. Leaving our carriage and baggage in the stable-yard, we were escorted along the narrow gravel walks and trimmed turf to the flight of white-stone steps leading up to a portico. The doors stood wide open, and in the hall sat an old Rip van Winkle-looking porter, fast asleep. He roused himself sorrowfully at our approach, and conducted us through a long suite of rooms to a distant boudoir, whence, while still afar off, we heard the most ominous sounds proceeding. Sounds of a female voice talking in a shrill, high, soprano key to the accompaniment of an impatient heavy male tread pacing the floor. Both ceased quite suddenly as the servant entered and announced us.

The nameless awkwardness of that moment was extreme. We knew too well that we had most inopportunely stumbled upon a sharp domestic squabble, although Sophie in her welcome to us was even more demonstrative than usual. It appears to afford some kind of a relief to a wife to vent the suppressed irritation she is feeling towards her husband in an ostentatious burst of affection to her female friends. Leopold received his guests as usual, with true British fortitude, but his clouded brow, and Sophie's flushed cheek, showed that the war of words between them had been of the sharpest.

Mr. Meredith sulked, looking ugly, superlatively ugly, as only handsome men and women can look. At last, to our infinite relief, he left the room. We all reverted to our natural voices at once.

'I am glad, so glad you are come, for I was beginning to bore myself frightful,' said Sophie candidly. 'Leopold is always out —he lives in the open, and then I am alone, all alone, in this big castle. But now you are here, we are going all to be happy and amused. In three days come Theodore and Herr von Zbirow, and you can commence your rehearsals.'

She then took us to our rooms, which communicated with each other. From the large window and balcony of mine was a striking view extending along the line of hills bordering the river. In the light of the summer moon the cadaverous walls of the distant ruin were distinctly visible, rising there like a gigantic tombstone or monolith.

'The Swallow's Nest we call it,' said Sophie. 'In the very oldest times it was a Roman fortress, afterwards a gothic castle. But it was let fall to complete ruin, and there was no house at all on the property till my father built this Schloss. You would not think it was new, would you?'

We both agreed that it was very successfully aged, much as one might remark complimentarily on an old lady that she was very well preserved. Castle Adlerberg, besides, seemed to combine mediæval picturesqueness with an attention to creature comforts rare in Germany, and due here, perhaps, to Graf von Seckendorf's English proclivities.

'I wonder what Mr. and Mrs. Meredith were quarrelling about when we arrived,' observed Eva, as soon as she and I were alone.

I shook my head. 'The great point is that they *were* quarrelling. I always thought the day must come for their two wills to clash, and that it would be a bad day. Perhaps it was just as well that we broke in and stopped them when we did.'

By dinner-time, however, the domestic horizon seemed pretty smooth again. In the evening Sophie showed us all over the castle. The keen, unconcealed pleasure she took in doing the honours made her prolong the operation to the utmost. We must inspect each room, passage, picture, piece of furniture, explore linen-chests, china-cupboards, and pass criticisms and judgments on all.

'Now come to the theatre,' she said, when everything else was exhausted, having kept this as a *bonne bouche* for the last.

The theatre was remarkably unconventional, untheatrical even, as our ideas go. An oblong hall, or rather picture-gallery, delicately decorated, and hung with engravings and water-colour drawings. There were seats for from one to two hundred spectators. About

one-third of the room was screened off by a heavy, dark-red velvet curtain.

Sophie took us behind the proscenium and showed us the stage, cleverly constructed for the easy disposal of scenery, scraps of which, together with a number of dusty, rusty 'properties,' were lying about.

'The theatre has been so little used lately,' Sophie explained. 'When I was a child we used to act here often, but there has now been nothing since three—four year—not since my Leopold's first visit, when we did some *tableaux*. And I recollect he said I looked so well that night with all my hair down, as Ophelia.'

Below the footlights were seats for a small orchestra of about thirty. From each side of the stage doors led into little corridors, out of which the dressing-rooms opened. The separation between spectators and performers, so difficult to manage except in a regular theatre, and so all-important to stage-illusion, was complete. Nothing, indeed, seemed wanting or imperfect. Standing on those boards, I thought, the chilliest amateur, the most *blasé* professional, must feel a touch of the stage-fever. How much more a parcel of enthusiasts, as our company promised to be!

Our appreciation of Castle Adlerberg was warm enough to satisfy even Sophie. Eva and I sang its praises in alternate gushes of admiration.

'The strangest thing is,' I remarked, as we left the theatre, 'that the place does not seem strange to me. I believe I should have known my way about it without a guide. From the first moment I was struck by that curious "I have been here before" feeling, that takes hold of one sometimes in a new region.'

'Yes; and I have heard tell,' said Sophie gravely, 'that it is an omen, and that one's fate, for good or bad, awaits one in such a place, certain. But you are not superstitious?'

I was laughing. 'No omen is wanted to convince me that my fate awaits me here. Am I not going to make my first appearance on any stage, and in an opera conducted by the composer, and that composer, Herr von Zbirow?'

'Yes; but then you are such a favourite of the *Meister's*,' said Sophie significantly,—'and he is quite the most particular man I know. But let us talk no more of fates and omens, it makes me nervous; and that my Leopold cannot bear.'

Life at Castle Adlerberg was pleasant, if rather monotonous. The habits and hours of the establishment had been almost entirely Englished, in accordance with Mr. Meredith's tastes. Only a certain un-English negligence and a few slipshod customs, which suited his lazy nature, remained; and Sophie, in the simple frugality that distinguished her housekeeping, the absence of display in her domestic arrangements, showed much sound German sense. Again, the isolation of the place and lack of society—immense distances lying between the inmates of the castle and their nearest neighbours—put the various excitements, the come and go of an English country house, out of the question here. Whilst Mr. Meredith, whose ruling passion appeared to be shooting, was out from morning till night with his gun, Sophie, knowing him thus innocently employed, contented herself with the little cares of housekeeping and dressing, Francis Joseph's education, and

above all the preparations for the coming *fête*.

But honeymoonshine was at an end, and Leopold's temper, despite the restraint of the presence of strangers, asserted itself now and then in a way that threatened ill for the future. To no open, no fair means would he yield. Force, persuasion, entreaty, would alike be thrown away on him; and Sophie, who had plenty of sense, would be the last woman in the world to waste powder and shot in attempting to play upon his feelings. So long as she kept to little feminine artifices and manœuvres she could always by her tact contrive to get a fair share of her own way. Unfortunately she was hasty, and Leopold Meredith's wife could not afford to lose her self-control, or forget prudence under provocation, as she was too apt to do.

The arrival of Von Zbirow and Theodore Marston was welcome, and gave the signal for a new state of things. Musical preparations began now in strict professional earnest. Von Zbirow took care of this. He was a despot, our conductor, by nature and habit. Woe unto those—and they were not few—who ventured to differ from him in matters artistic! Now despotism, though very odious, when the right to domineer is arbitrary and unearned, as the right of birth, and claimed on the strength of this alone, fitness apart, as in the case of a tyrannical prince or papa, becomes a virtue, sometimes a necessity at least, as in an army, and in artistic campaigns of all others. It may do so much good, and can do very little harm. Von Zbirow, as Lord Paramount of the proceedings, gave to our attempts a unity and efficiency that they would never have attained had our stage-manager been one whit less imperious, or allowed every member of his awkward squad to do that which was right in his own eyes. Under the Doctor's rigid superintendence Mrs. Meredith presided over the costume department. Here she was in her element, busy and happy, contriving picturesque slashed doublets and graceful mantles for Rafael; pilgrim's robes and page's suits for Perdita. Eva, also subject to Von Zbirow's orders, worked indefatigably at the painting and renovating of the scenery—no light task. There was a winter landscape which had already done duty at a children's fairy pantomime. She must put leaves on the trees, turf where the snow lay, vineyards on the slopes, turn the icicles into bunches of grapes, and the thing is done. There was also an interior, which he decided must be adapted for Perdita's room.

'But it represents a chapel,' objected Eva.

'What of that?' retorted the dictator; 'alter the foreground a little, leaving the rest as it is, and call it her oratory.'

And he would accept no excuse for any lapse of duty, any shortcomings in the work on hand.

But the full brunt of his severity fell upon Theodore and myself, whom he kept to hard unremitting practice, separately sometimes, sometimes together. His manner to me had settled down into the frank familiarity of master to pupil. Indeed, for the present, he seemed to have sunk all his other relations to the world, and to exist as composer and stage-manager only.

Now perhaps I was meek; perhaps he made allowances for me as an amateur; at all events we had no collisions. But between him and Theodore the

course of study ran anything but smooth, and gave rise to many an impromptu scene as exciting and pathetic as those of the *Portent* itself.

The climax came one afternoon. I was alone in the billiard-room—our music-room for the time being—quietly studying my *rôle*, when the door was flung violently open, and in stalked Von Zbirow, the picture of righteous indignation; pale, with dilated eyes, ruffled hair, and nervously brandishing with his hand the roll of music he held, taking it in the spirit for a truncheon. I knew directly that he had been having a private rehearsal with Theodore, and trembled for the issue.

'It is too much, it is indeed,' he gasped hoarsely.

He always spoke English when he was in a passion. Then, in a still, small voice of rage, at a white heat, he went on civilly,

'I am extremely sorry, on your account, Miss Noel, but I deeply regret to have to tell you that the whole affair is at an end. I *can* no more. The impertinence, the arrogance of Mr. Theodore Marston are past bearing. There is no true musician, no true artist left in him. He is spoilt—ten, twenty time spoilt. He give himself airs—he turn the music upside down if he could. He trouble himself for nothing but how to get one good place for his chest C. But,' he added slowly, with savage complacency, 'I know what come of that. He ruin his voice; and soon it will be a pain to hear him. I have done what I could. I spoke to him in right strong terms; but he will listen to no word. So I have told him that I withdraw my opera. Let him and Frau Merrydick get up one piece of Offenbach or Lecocq. He will do it—ah, first-rate. But, as for me, I will not be sacrificed—will not have my music mutilated by one vain young booby—all for to trot out his pet effects.'

And he flung himself into a chair, half relieved, half worn out by his philippic.

'It is strange, indeed,' I observed gently, 'that he should fail to do justice to what he admires so devoutly.'

'Theodore admire the music? He admire his own voice in it, you mean for to say, sure.'

'Well, a strong, full-toned, genuine tenor like his is just what it requires. And I think he could do justice to it.'

'He could, he could. But do you not perceive it is that very thing which exasperate me so? He *will* not.'

'We must make him, *Meister*.'

'*Hein*. Speak for yourself. For me I have enough. I will no more.'

'After all, *Meister*,' and I sighed, 'who is there you could name who would sing it better?'

'Is that a consolation? Comforter of Job.'

'There are parts in it that suit him curiously, scenes that seem to have been written expressly for his voice.'

'So they were, so they were,' cried Von Zbirow, clasping his hands over his head in desperation. 'Had I but known—'

'Indeed, indeed,' I interposed, 'I declare he will do his best when the moment comes. He is so enthusiastic about it.'

'Theodore? Never!' snapping his fingers.

'He told me yesterday that he considered your choice of him for the part the greatest musical compliment he had ever received.'

'Ah, that is all very well. He change his mind now.'

'And that he looked forward to this performance as he had

never done to anything since his first appearance on the stage.'

'Ah, bah!'

'And that—'

'Silence, Picciola; I will hear no word more. He is one rogue, Theodore, but he can talk, and you can talk. You are in league with him. Think you I don't know that? Now I go for a walk;' and he went off in a great hurry, already smiling perceptibly beneath his frown, and mortally afraid, I suspect, of losing the dignity of wrath altogether if he stayed to listen to my pleading any longer.

Five minutes afterwards the door burst open again, and enter, brusquely, Theodore without his temper.

'O Miss Noel—I beg your pardon.' He took up a book and pretended to read; then, after a pause, began very calmly, 'Miss Noel, I am really sorry, heartily sorry on your account, but this performance cannot go on. Von Zbirow is simply insupportable, and I have told him that I must fling up my part. Let him go and hunt for some other singer to sing it to his mind. I wish he may find him. But I won't stand having his whims and caprices drilled into me as if I were a marionette. Why, if I were to let him dictate, he would utterly spoil the effect of his own music. The opera will be a *fiasco*, thanks to him, of course; but I shall be the sufferer just as well as he, and I do protest against sacrificing my reputation as a singer to his obstinate folly. Such fanatical composers had better get saints or steam-engines to sing for them. No artist with a grain of sense or spirit can be expected to put up with such absurd notions as his;' and there he stood, chafing and fretting like a spirited horse under the curb. I thought I should have laughed aloud.

'But the music, the music,' I expostulated. 'You cannot have altered your opinion about that. As for me, I grow fonder of it every day.'

'O, the music is very fair in itself, if he were not bent on ruining it by the treatment he insists upon. All would go well if he would just allow me to interpret Rafael in my own way. Ridiculous to lay down the law to me, and pull me up at every bar as if I were a novice. Besides, what does he know about singing? What would he say if I were to offer to correct his compositions?'

'It is a pity,' said I philosophically, 'as you would be sure to make a great thing of the part.'

'Do you think so?' he asked indifferently.

'No doubt of it. As he is not here to pull us up, suppose we were to go through the first duet.'

It was the old prescription of the viper's skin as a cure for its bite. Nothing equalled the *Meister's* music as a mollifying ointment for the wounds caused by his speech.

'You know,' observed Theodore, after a while, apologetically, 'Von Zbirow is so touchy, so testy and strange, that occasionally I *almost* lose my temper with him. Fifty times before this I should have thrown up the whole affair but for you.'

'Well, I confess,' I rejoined, laughing, 'that I and everybody would consider it very ungallant of you to leave poor Perdita in the lurch, without so much as the shadow of a tenor to support her. You are not to think of any such thing.'

And we sang more duets. Theodore's brow by degrees became perfectly clear. His ill-humour and the quarrel were rapidly vanishing out of sight.

'Now sing *the* air,' said Theo-

dore, leaning idly in an armchair, with his head thrown back, his eyes appearing to count the cracks in the ceiling. So I sang:

'I come from where, in sorrow and unrest,
A maiden waits and sings, "O fair pale face,
Ah, who hath borne thee far from my embrace?"'

'I should like to sit and listen to that for ever,' he exclaimed, with vehemence.

'It is most beautiful.'

'And you—most adorable.'

The words fell quickly, half inaudibly from his lips, and almost at the same moment Von Zbirow reëntered, with Mrs. Meredith. Theodore rose with a start; but as I looked from him to the Doctor, I saw that the reconciliation, though tacit, was complete.

This was not the last storm, but the lesser ones that followed from time to time were successfully weathered, until everything was in full swing, and approaching some sort of perfection.

The promised bass, warranted by Von Zbirow to 'do no harm,' had arrived, and fully justified his reputation. He may be briefly described as made up of the negatives of all bad qualities, but without any affirmative excellences worth mention. Off the stage he was remarkable only for his taciturnity. He laboured under a constitutional inability to express his thoughts and feelings—of which I am sure he was full—on any subject and in any language. Attempts to draw him out had the effect of putting him to the torture, but no ordeal could extract from him more than a garbled Yes or No.

But so long as he was allowed to sit apart, hold his tongue, and respectfully worship Mrs. Meredith, whose perennial flow of language naturally struck him as next door to a miracle, he looked perfectly content. On the stage his shyness vanished; he was always up to the mark, always patient, and gave no trouble.

On the other hand, Mrs. Meredith's *protégés*, of which there were three now on the spot, and which completed the caste of the opera, cost Von Zbirow many sleepless nights and fresh gray hairs. First, the sisters St. Angelo, two inseparables, who had lately made themselves a duet reputation by singing together in some German musical circles. The elder, fair, with a shrill soprano 'some thousand feet above the level of the sea,' as Theodore expressed it, and who murmured a little over the part of Lucrezia as too insignificant for her; but she was consoled by the reflection that it gave her the opportunity to appear in rich bridal attire, and exhibit the very highest notes in her scale. The younger sister, with a good contralto, the better performer of the two, but who submitted meekly to play second fiddle on all occasions, and who cherished a secret passionate devotion to the composer, spared no pains to satisfy him in the *rôle* of Rafael's mother. Last, but not least, in his own estimation, a semi-amateur, who played Count Dario, and who cherished wild dreams, and confided them to me, of making this the most important part in the opera, by the powerful and artistic impersonation he meant to make thereof. Von Zbirow got wind of the delusion, and encouraged him in it—'to make him work,' he said.

All the players, with the exception of Theodore Marston, required a good deal of drilling as to the use, not so much of their voices, as of their arms and legs. No amount of ordinary drilling would, I believe, have raised the little

company above mediocrity. But Von Zbirow's galvanic influence acted upon us as upon his orchestra. The lame, the weak, the timid were lifted out of themselves, and were astonished as at a miracle by their own powers.

It was a little art revival, a propaganda—nothing to last, perhaps, but it worked wonders whilst it lasted.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE 'PORTENT.'

I WONDER if heroes, when on the eve of action, are ever haunted with sudden and unnecessary fears lest they should fall unutterably short of what is expected of them—dire forebodings that they are now going to prove to themselves and the world, once for all, what impostors they are.

To compare small things with great, the most hideous nervous misgivings came swarming around me like bees or mosquitoes to harass me as the eventful moment drew near. It was rather late to find out the truth now, when we were already dressed for our parts, and the scene was set, and it wanted but half an hour to the time of commencement—rather late to repent being pledged to a great piece of presumption. I, an unequivocal amateur, alas! about to 'create' a leading part in Von Zbirow's opera, with Theodore Marston, now a practised artist, as my partner, to create the other. What if the success of the last rehearsals had, so far as it concerned myself, been a pleasing infatuation, and the composer were gnashing his teeth in secret over his mistaken kindness and confidence in intrusting the *rôle* to me?

Von Zbirow cut short my tremors, caught and interpreted an appealing look, and came up to reassure me, saying, in his most peremptory way,

'Keep your mind easy. I know what you are thinking. The first amateur, take him the whole year long, must stand below the artist. Good. But for all that will it happen that now and then he shoot over him, be it for one evening—for one hour only. What you will do to-night you could not repeat again and again three times in every week all the season through. That is what artists have before them. They must reserve their force, give often no more than their average, and by their average they stand or fall. Now it matters not what your average would be, since we have only to-night to think of, when you shall give us your all best. Come, Frau Merrydick's theatre is not the Royal Opera-house at Ludwigsheim; your voice fills it quite; you have well mastered the music. And think not to tell me you are a novice at the acting; I don't believe it. You are well supported. What want you more? Courage.'

'*Vogue la galère*, then,' said I gaily. He had scattered the mosquitoes, and they never came near me again.

A rustling of silk, subdued murmuring, laughing voices on the other side of the curtain, intimated that the audience had begun to assemble. The guests—partly fashionable German families from the neighbouring Residenz town, partly fashionable English from a favourite mountain watering-place—were nearly all unknown, even by name, to us, the performers. For the last three days the castle had been crammed with company, and the actors, absorbed by frequent rehearsals and minor preparations, had of necessity led a life quite apart from the idle inmates, keeping different hours, and not even

dining with the Merediths and their friends.

Presently Theodore appeared, in radiant spirits. His fisher-boy's costume was the counterpart of his dress as Masaniello at the Priory ball, where first he and I had met. Perhaps it was this which so forcibly threw out the change two years had wrought on the wearer—the change from the rough cast of a possible Antinous to the thing itself—the perception of which struck me suddenly that night as he approached.

He had a little bunch of rare wild-flowers in his hand, and put them into mine, saying,

'Mrs. Meredith provides bouquets *en règle* for the singers to-night. Here are some of those mountain things you said you were fond of. I risked my neck to get them for you this afternoon.'

Wild pinks, saxifrage, gentians, and maidenhair; of all blossoms and leaves the daintiest while they last—about ten minutes. They were my favourites, as he knew, and I took them from his hand with a pleased smile. At the same moment, as ill-luck would have it, a vision of Elsa crossed my mind—pretty, flower-like, pink-and-white Elsa. I looked at Theodore, feeling as though the same untoward image must have appeared to him. But no; his mind was perfectly untroubled, as he carelessly dashed back his curls that crowded from under his red fisherman's cap and encumbered his forehead.

'Look at Antonio,' he whispered, as our baritone came in, 'with his long thin legs and his short cloak. Is he not just like the cranes at the Zoological Gardens? Miss Severn, Miss Severn, a new study in birds for you. Ah, sister St. Angelo number one. How did you think she did Lucrezia at the rehearsal last night?'

'I thought,' I whispered back, 'that she did it in blue satin embroidered with gold.'

He laughed.

'There, now you have said all. How I abhor that girl! Here comes the sister; she is a good creature, but drives the poor Doctor to distraction by the sentimental way in which she follows him about with her eyes. You know their real name is Michael; St. Angelo sounds better. Whom are we waiting for?'

'Count Dario, my noble father—he is late.'

'Not he. I saw him dressed, three hours ago. It is all a sham; for effect, you know. Ah, there he is, at last; so well disguised as a fine-looking man that, upon my word, I should never have known him—would you?'

And now, attention. Von Zbirow had disappeared, and taken his conductor's post below. He gave the signal at once, and the orchestra struck up the overture.

A short prelude—not a string of 'elegant extracts' or pretty *pot-pourri* of the opera behind—but a little proem that struck the keynote of the spirit, style, and colouring of the musical drama to follow.

'Are you nervous?' whispered Theodore to me, as we listened behind the scenes.

No; to be nervous one must be conscious, self-harassed. I was neither to-night, and shook my head.

'Do I look so?'

'Not you. As for me, I never dare to be nervous under Von Zbirow's spectacled nose.'

As he said, it was one effect of our conductor's serious intense concentration of purpose that it carried one out of oneself, and petty personal shyness and timidity died on the spot.

The curtain drew up, disclosing

Eva's prettily painted scene of the vineyard slopes, with a distance ingeniously adapted to the tiny stage, and showing a view of the lake and castle in the background. The spectators applauded, which encouraged the vintagers, who trooped on and sang their opening chorus with spirit and ease.

Then I seemed to *feel* the awakening of the conductor's eye, the flash of keen expectation that ran over his face as Theodore came on the stage.

For, rail at him though he might, fall out with him though he ever would, Von Zbirow in a secret corner of his heart cherished a spark of warmest admiration for the young artist he so persistently ran down, and anticipated great things of him; and Theodore knew it.

Eva, the sisters St. Angelo, and I stood in a cluster at the wings watching him, and agreed in a breath that he was brilliant to-night. Confident of himself, sure of approval and applause which were like sunshine and fresh air to him, he was happy as man can never be except in his own chosen element. Destiny is a cap that fits so few comfortably that is it not a positive treat to look, for once, upon a man who both is, and admits himself to be, the right man in the right place?

The duet with Antonio was given with an animation that exhilarated the spectators, both before and behind the scenes. The landscape was then shifted, disclosing Perdita's room in the interior of the castle, and myself, in a Juliet-like white-satin robe and jeweled girdle, looking out pensively into the gloaming over the lake.

The 'Dream Song,' that followed here, had to be sung *piano pianissimo*, but every word Von Zbirow insisted should be distinctly audible at the farthest end of the room. He had made me study it syllable by syllable. I could have sung it in my sleep. The melody and the mysterious muffled accompaniment of the orchestra seemed to indicate and to inspire the right dramatic expression. It was like the musical emanation of a dream.

No pause at the end. Upon the last note of Perdita's cadence Rafael breaks in with his serenade, the sharpest contrast, in its bold, direct, manly passion to the shapeless, tremulous fancies of the girl. It woke me up. I had to act awakening, and must needs be caught by Theodore's animation, a tide that soon swept timidity away. O, it was all inspiriting—delightful. Only when Rafael in the last scene of the act makes his way into the castle, into Perdita's presence, and urges her to fly with him, methought his impetuous pleading was a thought too earnest, too real in its passion and fire. I was half angry with him for the tone of his acting, but must follow his lead, act up to him, match him with pathos and tenderness. We were only on the stage, thought I.

A soldier after a hard-fought battle is not more unable to give an account of the particulars of the engagement than I felt to criticise our performance of the first act when it was over. It was only after the curtain had fallen, and Von Zbirow came to join us behind the scenes with a face literally beaming, that I knew the result. If he was pleased the victory so far was won.

He was hastening forwards, half beside himself with pleasure and excitement. I thought he was going to embrace Theodore on the spot, shed tears, and call us both

his children. But just as he approached, and saw us standing side by side waiting to meet him, some unlucky intrusive thought seemed to turn all this effervescence to flatness in a moment. His smile neutralised into a stare, and then darkened into a frown.

'What was wrong?' I asked, in alarm.

'Nothing, nothing.'

'Then it went well?'

'O, it went well; it was done admirable, done up to the life,' he said blandly, but with a terrific sarcasm somewhere, the force of which was entirely lost upon me.

He turned upon his heel abruptly as he finished speaking. Theodore broke into a boyish laugh that sent the *Meister* off in a huff.

'What on earth has vexed him?' I asked, more at fault than ever.

'Jealous, can't you see?' whispered Theodore, with mischievous exultation—'Von Zbirow, and of me! What a joke!'

I laughed too, and said,

'How absurd!' quite unaffectedly.

Whereupon Theodore in his turn looked displeased. The ground was delicate to-night. Go where I would, I must pique somebody, it seemed.

Yet a last and deeper mystification. Whilst the orchestra were playing the interlude I suddenly observed Eva's eyes watching me with a most extraordinary inquiring expression of solicitude.

'What now?' I asked anxiously. 'Is my voice husky, my hair coming down, or anything else awry?'

A glance in the glass satisfied me on the latter score.

'How do you feel?' she asked.

'Feel!' In my page's attire did she mean? 'Quite happy, thanks. Come, Eva,' I added aside, reprovingly, 'we are serving art, surely, on this occasion, and not Mrs. Grundy. *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, say I. No need to look so nervous. With Imogen and Rosalind and Viola for precedents—'

I only saw that I had misunderstood her. There was no time to stay to get an explanation. I was called on at this point, and in five minutes forgot everything in Perdita, her songs and her sorrows.

The second act, Von Zbirow had warned us, would be the crucial test of our powers. We had begun well. It was necessary now not only to keep up to that mark, but to rise above it—if we could. I said to myself, that if I never did anything more my life long, I would do this; if I never trod another platform or sang another note, I would acquit myself worthily in this. As for the audience, I had literally neither sight nor mind for them. Von Zbirow was my audience. No single face did I distinguish, only the conductor's eyes; that seemed to challenge and nerve me to prove myself an artist like himself.

'I come from where, in sorrow and unrest,
A maiden waits—'

A strange telling air, so simple too—a theme of a few notes only. Was it his own? Was it an echo of some old half-remembered Sclavonic folk-song he had heard in his native land? He would never tell. It bore the stamp of those vivid, individual, traditional melodies that strike home at a first hearing, and live in the memory for ever, like proverbs.

The audience were dumb as stones; but theirs was the close silence of attention and expectation, not the fidgety one of indiffer-

ence. They gave vent to their feelings in redoubled applause at the close of the act; and Von Zbirow came to join us in the greenroom, smiling and benignant, to assure us that the real danger was over, and that it was all plain sailing now.

What shall I say of the last act? I thought Von Zbirow was right. Perdita's part seemed easy indeed. But love, sorrow, regret, despair are sentiments so nearly allied that it becomes a simple matter to blend so as to form from them a complete picture. Theodore's more complex task—as the lover faithless in deed, though faithful at heart; the man overborne by circumstances, and insensibly led on to do the thing he would not; the victim, not of force, but persuasion, through the helplessness of an outwardly facile, inwardly tenacious nature—he accomplished as few could have done. The peculiar charm of all his impersonations was such an apparent spontaneity as only suggested the inspiration of to-night, not the labour of yesterday.

The end is coming now. Once more the minstrel page, at the bidding of the bridal pair, stands forth to sing for them:

> 'O fair pale face!
> Ah, who hath borne thee far from mine embrace?'

And for the last time. For Perdita, according to the merciful and æsthetic laws of the dramatic world to which she belongs, may not outlive her dead heart.

Nor may her lover survive her.

A last crowning effort on Theodore's part, one mad scene, and all is over.

Not yet.

Von Zbirow had put his veto upon all recalls during the performance. Now, however, in acknowledgment of indefatigable clapping and vociferous cheers, the actors must present themselves again and again. The last time, Theodore and I, responding to a separate call, came on together, leading the half-reluctant, half-gratified composer between us.

For the first moment that evening I was now collected enough to look at our audience with a seeing eye, and to discern face from face in the crowd.

A minute afterwards, and the curtain was between us and the stalls again.

Von Zbirow, Antonio, Count Dario were all round me, outvieing each other in what sounded to me the most extravagant compliments. I had surpassed myself—myself at the rehearsals, said one; it was a finished piece of acting, it was a *tour de force*, said another. I was bewildered. Was it they who were mad, or I?

'You are tired surely,' said Theodore suddenly, in an altered tone.

'A very little,' I said, with a laugh. 'That death-scene was hard work, you know, for a beginner;' and I looked round rather confusedly for Eva. 'Where is she?' I repeated. 'Send her to me.'

For *she* knew that out of that medley company of excellencies with decorations and snuff-boxes, officers in resplendent uniforms, over-dressed dowagers and smiling girls, I had singled out one face which it had been good for me if I had never seen.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A FAIR ENCOUNTER.

Eva came, to find me in my room, whither I had flown direct for refuge. I had flung the window open, and myself on a chair, feeling, and probably looking, as

wild and dismayed as Leporello when he rushes on to the stage immediately after he has stumbled on the Commendatore's statue-ghost.

'Is *she* there?' was my first question, as Eva entered.

'She is. The instant the curtain drew up I saw them both, in the front.'

'How is she looking to-night?'

'Beautifully dressed, *very* handsome, and the brightest of the bright.'

'The old, old story. And he the same, of course. But what ill wind has blown them over here? When did they arrive?'

'This afternoon. That is all I have been able to find out.'

'How was it we never heard?'

'Only recollect how busy we have been rehearsing these last few days. We have seen next to nothing of Mrs. Meredith and her party—thought and heard of nothing but the *Portent*.'

Moreover, to neither Sophie nor her husband had I ever spoken of the Gerards. Yet it seemed to me that I ought to have known, or felt, or dreamt that they were coming, and not have been staggered thus.

Now, then, for a test. The proof of strength, as of goodness or greatness, is to be strong extempore, when neither forewarned nor forearmed.

'I suppose this must be their first meeting with Mrs. Meredith,' continued Eva.

'Meredith, Meredith!' I stammered confusedly. 'Am I awake? It is all exactly like a dream I had once—my dream when I was ill. Jasper here, and Hilda, and Leopold Meredith?'

'Dearest,' said Eva soothingly, but amazed, 'what in the world has Mr. Meredith got to do with the Gerards more than others?'

'I don't know,' said I stupidly.

She looked puzzled, and I believe she thought my mind was wandering.

'Shall you be able to go down?' she asked affectionately.

'*Rather*,' I replied, with emphasis. 'I'm quite impatient to meet them again, to see their happiness with my own eyes, and believe in it;' and I sprang up. 'Not in these weeds, though,' I added, gazing dolefully at my page's fashions, and, like Rosalind, suddenly disconcerted thereby. 'What shall I do with my doublet and hose?'

'Take them off,' suggested Eva practically.

'Then give me my woman's weeds. Quick!'

'Which?'

'Anything, anything; whatever comes first. O, no, no; not that white frippery, please; it's tumbled to death. Nor yet the blue; detestably unbecoming colour to dark people.'

'What then?' asked Eva, laughing.

'Let me try the pale maize, and those red roses in the glass. There, I wish it were sackcloth and ashes, though! I think stage finery gives one a peculiar loathing of silk attire.'

'All the same, you look uncommonly well in it to-night.'

'Do I? I wish to. But I fear it is only your affectionate eyes that paint me so.'

'Theodore is breaking his heart for you,' she said suddenly, with a curious half-wistful significance.

'Bah! his heart is like a Roman pearl, given to melt a little very easily, but warranted not to break. Now, dear, I'm ready at last—"armed and well prepared." Lead on.'

Von Zbirow and Theodore met us on the stairs, and we all entered the reception-room together. For the first few minutes I was

sensible only of a blaze of light, a strange crowd in wonderful toilettes and coats of many colours, and compliments raining down like a shower of sugar-plums in a distracting manner. I had enough to do to accept my share gracefully, smile, and respond in my best German. The throng parted a little, to enable us to run the gauntlet; then pressed round as we passed on, receiving felicitations from one group after another, till presently I found myself in the middle of the room, exchanging friendly conventional greetings with Hilda and Jasper Gerard, and inwardly thanking something or somebody for what had come like a sudden miraculous gift of utter indifference. Sensibility had received its quietus, as it were, and obligingly died in a moment. I had never felt more composed in my life.

But it was all over very quickly. Supper was announced; upon which Leopold Meredith marched up and offered his arm to me, signifying to Von Zbirow to do the same to Sophie, a preconcerted compliment to the composer of the *Portent* and his *prima donna*. The general move to the dining-room taken, I saw myself placed beside the master of the house at the head of the table. Jasper was seated on my right hand, Hilda not far off. I looked from one to the other, and can hardly define the impression I received. It was not one with Eva's. I became instantaneously sensible of a marked alteration in them both. Hilda's gaiety was not natural. There was a hard look in Jasper's face that was new. Farther than this just yet I would not go.

Mr. Meredith was absorbed in artistically carving the Rhine salmon before him. I turned to my other neighbour.

'Did you drop from the clouds,' I began carelessly, 'that you alight upon us quite suddenly among our new friends at Castle Adlerberg?'

'I really might ask almost the same question of you.'

'Fancy my surprise,' I continued lightly: 'here, in the heart of Franconia, singing to a number of people I don't know, most of whom I never even heard of; all at once I look down, and behold two perfectly familiar English faces.'

'We are on our way home from Italy,' he explained; 'and last week, returning to Ludwigsheim after a six weeks' tour in the Tyrol, we happened to meet Meredith there.' (He had, as I now recalled, gone over to the capital for a few days on some pretext, to escape from the bustle and disturbance at the castle.) 'We were slightly acquainted in England. He told us all the particulars of the musical enterprise in hand over here. Of course it interested me very much, in every way. He persuaded us to delay our journey home, to come and make his wife's acquaintance, and spend a few weeks with them here. We only arrived to-day, just in time for the performance.' He stopped, and then added, with most unusual animation, 'I can't express to you what pleasure it gave me; I wish I could.'

'Ah, Von Zbirow's genius turns everything it touches to gold,' said I enthusiastically, still more than half music-mad, and ready with unlimited homage for the *Meister* and his handiwork.

'I don't pretend to criticise Von Zbirow's creation. I meant yours.'

'Mine?'

'Your Perdita to-night.'

'Well, criticise, criticise.'

'No; for all that I can say is that it was quite as much a stroke of genius as the composer's part

in it,' he replied deliberately, without looking up. He was not fond of paying compliments, that I knew, and the effect of his was to make me speechless with surprise for a moment.

'Such music *is* inspiring,' I replied, 'and so I felt it; to say nothing of—'

'Of?'

'Such artists,' I let fall, glancing across to where Theodore sat by the elder of the sisters St. Angelo, paying her but lame and random attentions, for his eyes were ever wandering to our end of the table, trying to strike up a serio-comic conversation with mine.

'Do you mean Mr. Marston?'

'I mean Mr. Marston. Whatever he may once have been found wanting in as an artist, he has now contrived to learn. You must surely own that now, after seeing him to-night.'

'O, he did well, but it's his profession,' said Mr. Gerard dryly; 'and I think the lion's share of honours should fall to you.'

'Should it?'

He laughed. 'How little you seem to care! I perceive you are not stage-struck.'

'Did you think I was? O, no, I should never do for an actress; I should so soon get tired of applause.'

'But not of your art, surely? Do you leave that quite out of the question?'

'Even that would never be more than half enough by itself. As for artists, you know,

"We live, and they experiment on life."

I could not be satisfied with making experiments only.'

'You believe in better things, then?' he said incredulously.

'In one,' I answered. 'For instance, thus much I know, that half an echo from a kindred spirit—some one who feels and thinks with you—is, for the pleasure it brings, worth all the gratification and surprise that very same person could cause you by a *tour de force* in fine art, or outsiders by their praise and applause.'

He was silent. No doubt he thought Theodore was in my mind as I spoke, and I did not care to undeceive him.

'Of course it depends,' I went on. 'Some people think their life worthless if they never become shining lights in the world. I know you don't hold that opinion. Neither do I. But without sympathy in those that share our existence one might, I think, as well be dead.'

I looked up at him as I spoke. His countenance betokened a strange inward mental tension, though impassible and able to keep its own counsel, as I remembered it always. Yet the nerve-force must vent itself somehow. His right arm was resting on the table, and his fingers, unconsciously perhaps, were enclosing an empty wine-glass. Suddenly it cracked beneath his pressure, and fell in splinters.

'A dangerous experiment, surely,' said I, startled.

'Hullo, Gerard, what are you doing?' exclaimed Mr. Meredith, in a loud voice, with a laugh. 'Playing conjuring tricks with my father-in-law's champagne-glasses? I knew a fellow who lost his hand trying that. Look out, pray!'

Mr. Gerard apologised. He had not even cut his fingers.

The conversation became general. Mine was now chiefly addressed to Mr. Meredith. Never had I taken such pains to make myself agreeable to him before; never found it so easy nor succeeded so well. I could have outvied Sophie herself in vivacity

that night. Jasper was listening, and put in a word now and then.

Supper ended at last. Theodore immediately found his way to my side, and never left it again that evening. He was charming—the hero of the hour, perfectly well aware that every lady present, old or young, was more or less enamoured of him, frank and persistent in his apparent devotion to one. To repel it then and there would have required a strength of mind and coolness of head quite beyond me at the moment. Together we wandered through the passages, revisited the empty stage, sang little snatches from the opera, strolled out on the terrace, regardless of inquisitive eyes and tattling tongues. All the while, despite this effervescence of excitement, I felt as still and sober as possible underneath. Ah, this was acting in all conscience; the other was child's play by comparison. The company probably, with a single exception, drew one and the same conclusion. How, indeed, should they know that it was less Theodore's homage than another's spectatorship thereof which carried me away?

I said with a single exception. Once Von Zbirow had posted himself in a doorway, leaning against the wall, and we brushed close by where he stood. Theodore did not even see him. But as we passed, I distinctly heard a voice hissing or humming in an undertone to an extemporised air—not out of the *Portent*,

'Toujours nous nous vengeons sur ceux
qui nous aiment,
De ceux que nous avons aimés.'

I turned round indignantly, and met a problematical smile. There is a demonic power of perception in some people, that makes me positive that the black art can yet be practised with success.

It was long past midnight when the company separated, and the castle began to subside into something like quiet.

A second time for me that night the curtain fell, and I was myself again, alone with Eva in my room, where I still must keep walking restlessly up and down.

'Over at last!' I exclaimed exultingly. 'Eva, Eva, is there an opiate anywhere about? For I feel as if I should *never* go to sleep again.'

'If I were you, I should not wish it.'

'What do you mean? I think the everlasting sleep of Hades would find a hearty welcome from me to-night, if only it were to be had.'

'And you might be so happy, Maisie.'

'The price?'

'You are loved.'

'Chacun à son tour,' said I flippantly.

'How can you?' she exclaimed reproachfully. 'Theodore worships you. Every one sees it, every one is talking about it; and you—' Her voice faltered here, and the tears started to her eyes.

I watched her wonderingly. Eva was not foolish; she was even wise, so far as it lies in woman so to be; yet not for that, perhaps, proof against this 'last infirmity of noble (female) mind,' a soft and hopeless *penchant* for one many years younger than herself. Must we all come to this? Most women do. We love what we have lost, especially youth; so perhaps it was natural that Eva's heart should more readily incline to Theodore, a boy by her side, and who, she might know, could never requite her partiality—a weakness then as difficult for me to realise as it was for her at that moment to enter into my young unaffected ingrati-

tude for favours bestowed upon me.

'Eva,' I pleaded impatiently, 'it cannot signify whether he adores me or not. You know I only tolerate him.'

'You are thinking of Jasper Gerard.'

'No; I am thinking of Elizabeth Müller.'

'Elsa,' she repeated, astounded, 'surely *he* never thinks of her now!'

'O, never, depend upon that,' said I, laughing; 'and that is how the world goes. Take care of your heart, Eva. I am glad I am not a man. I don't think I should ever have the face to try and persuade any girl to believe in the reality and value of my affections. What is Theodore's heart worth?'

'Nothing to-morrow, perhaps,' sighed Eva; 'but everything to-day.'

Wisdom spoke there; but I was not to be silenced.

'To you it may seem so, but to me, nothing. Yesterday, to-day, and for ever.'

'Because of Jasper Gerard. Do you mean to say you can love him still?'

'I mean that I loved him, and that is enough.'

Just as I spoke sounds of music from the terrace below broke upon the stillness of the night. We heard a number of men's voices singing in chorus to the accompaniment of violins, flutes, and clarionets.

'A serenata, by the gods of the ancients!' I exclaimed.

'It is Theodore,' whispered Eva; 'I know his voice.'

'And Von Zbirow,' I rejoined; 'I know his music.'

The window was wide open. We listened breathlessly, till the short, soft, playful strain ended. The boughs that swayed in the summer wind and the rustling leaves outside the lattice seemed to murmur their approval.

'You ought to appear,' observed Eva.

'And say, "Thanks, friends, for a night surprise;" and so forth. Come with me, then.'

We stepped out on the balcony, looked down on the upturned faces below, fitfully illuminated by the glare of a lantern or two, and gave them a smile and good-night. The musicians then dispersed; but I lingered, looking out upon the silent garden, the round projecting castle towers, the dark woods beyond, and, far away, the gleaming white battlements of the Swallow's Nest. Only when the early summer dawn began to break did I abandon my post and my musings, still loth to realise that this, the nonpareil evening of my life, was over indeed, and the sun about to rise on the morrow just as usual.

(To be continued.)

THE DEEP, DEEP SEA.*

It may be generally accepted that the bottom of the ocean is that part thereof with which the ordinary voyager would least desire to become acquainted. And if, through a kindly or adverse fate, he found it had been decided that he must be drowned, it is not likely that he would be particularly solicitous as to the depth, the temperature, or the specific gravity of the water in which he was to find an uneasy resting-place. He would be comparatively indifferent as to whether his dying hands should convulsively clutch in their impotent grasp a shore or an organic deposit; or whether on the particular ocean-bed alluring him to repose he was to be pillowed on blue, red, green, gray, or coral mud, or tucked in more scientifically with the oozes differenced as Globigerina, Radiolarian, and Diatomaceous; or whether, again, he took a longing lingering farewell of the surface and the sun to explore, unconscious, the secrets of regions distinguished by the abundance of their manganese.

It was, however, to ascertain the conditions and the phenomena of submarine life, rather than the amenities of submarine death, that the expedition of the Challenger, the particulars of which we have before us in the several narratives of Mr. W. J. J. Spry and Lord George Campbell, was undertaken; its purpose being to develop into precision and intimacy our knowledge of things in the depths of the ocean from its previously existing state of indefiniteness and obscurity. It is to the invention of ocean telegraphy that Mr. Spry attributes the first stimulation of the great desire as well as the necessity for a knowledge of the contour of the bed of the ocean. 'To insure success it was essential to know the configuration and the soundings of the sea, the shape and character of its bed, the nature of the creatures and plants that haunt its depths, the force and set of its currents, the figure and dimensions of the great ocean-basins, and the temperature of the water at various depths.' In these words we have the *rationale* of the world-engirdling mission of the Challenger, extending from December 1872 to May 1876; about the issues of which Mr. Spry, in the last pages of his volume, has some hopeful words. He is happy to be able to say that

'The cruise has been successfully accomplished, and the intentions of the expedition happily achieved. That it will exalt our national reputation to a very considerable extent, in one of the most popular branches of the service, cannot for a moment be doubted.† The completion of surveys; the success of soundings; configuration of the depths of the great ocean, with its nature and temperatures, and the composition of its bottom, have all been investigated and carried out by the hydrographic staff; and Professor Thomson and his talented assistants may well be complimented on their labours,

* *The Cruise of H.M.S. Challenger: Voyages over many Seas, Scenes in many Lands.* By W. J. J. Spry, R.N. With Map and Illustrations. Third edition. (London: Sampson Low & Co., 1877.)

Log-Letters from the Challenger. By Lord George Campbell. Third edition. (London: Macmillan & Co., 1876.)

† The Geographical Congress held at Paris, August 1875, awarded to the members of the Challenger Expedition a first-class medal, as a token of admiration for the work done by them in the cause of science.

which have contributed such an abundance of material to the various departments of natural history and the other scientific branches under their direction.

By and by, when all these subjects shall have been investigated, and opinions formed from the numerous and valuable collections sent home from time to time, then—and only then—will a true idea be obtained of the activity and research of each member of the expedition during the course of the voyage.

Doubtless we shall be told of wondrous facts which will read like fairy tales; for previously no sounding-line had ever traversed the great oceans, or mapped out their figure. We now know that there are laws which govern the geographical distribution of marine plants and animals, as well as those we are familiar with on the earth's surface: of the myriads of curious creatures, organised with delicacy and beauty, existing in these previously unsounded depths; creatures with numberless eyes, and others without any; starfish growing on long and slender stalks; of beautiful phosphorescent avenues of vegetation; fish of all hues, blue and gold, striped and banded, in all colours and sizes, from the tiniest infusoria to the huge whale.

It is impossible at present to foresee or estimate the vast amount of information that will result from this the greatest scientific expedition that ever sailed from any shore.'

There had been pioneer sounding expeditions of a more or less desultory kind, and giving interesting results, before the year 1868, when the first systematic examination of the ocean's bed was undertaken in connection with natural history and physical geography. In that year H.M.S. Lightning, in the course of a six weeks' cruise under the guidance and direction of the Royal Society, carried on dredging operations in 650 fathoms of water, a greater depth than had, up to that time, been attempted; and in 1869 the Porcupine did much to further the interests of science in more extended explorations between the latitudes of Cape Clear and Galway on the west coast of Ireland, and again off the south and west coast of Ireland, and still further in a third cruise, which covered much of the sea between the coast of Scotland and the Faroe Islands, in course of which the dredge was successfully used at a maximum depth of 2400 fathoms.

'In 1870 the Porcupine was again engaged in the service of the Council of the Royal Society, and proceeded at first in a south-westerly direction towards the farthest point to which the survey extended the year before, and afterwards to the coast of Portugal, and to Gibraltar, where a vast quantity of interesting and important data was obtained. In addition to the sounding and dredging, thermometric observations were constantly taken, proving even more successful than those obtained during the previous voyages. The results showed unsuspected variations in the deep-sea temperature, the existence of a general oceanic circulation, and the presence of life at the greatest depths. The scientific and practical importance of the facts revealed by these short and imperfect inquiries was such as to render their continuance a matter of national concern: so much so that the Council of the Royal Society brought before the Government a project for extended investigation, which was eventually approved of, and a committee appointed to prepare the plans of operation.

It was suggested that a vessel should be fitted out for a three or four years' cruise, during which time sounding, dredging, thermometric observation, and chemical examination of sea-water should be carried on continuously, with a view to a more perfect knowledge of the physical and biological conditions of the great ocean-basins, of the direction and velocity of the great drifts and currents, of the fauna of the deep water, and of the zoology and botany of those portions of the globe which are at present comparatively unknown.

H.M.S. Challenger, a spar-decked corvette of 2000 tons displacement and 400 horse-power, was selected to carry out these recommendations; and the necessary alterations to fit her for the service on which she was to be employed were made in the dockyard at Sheerness. With the exception of two 64-pounders, all the guns on the main deck were removed, so as to obtain the required accommodation. In addition to cabins for the captain, commander, and director of the scientific staff, there were spacious compartments for surveying operations and analysing purposes, a laboratory for the chemist, and a studio for the photographer, all fitted with every appliance which skill and science could suggest. On the upper deck stood an 18-horse double-cylinder engine, with shafting and drums for heaving in the dredging and sounding-lines, extending entirely across the ship; and on the after-part of the deck, besides the usual standard and other compasses, was the Fox dipping-circle, with which it was

intended to make an extensive daily series of magnetic observations.'

The course of the Challenger, thus specially equipped, under the command of Captain G. S. Nares, and with Professor Wyville Thomson as the director of the scientific staff, first carried the good ship from Sheerness to Lisbon, Gibraltar, and Madeira; across the Atlantic, through the trade-wind region, to the Virgin Islands; then northwards to Bermuda, and onward to the coast of North America as far as the latitude of Nova Scotia. Returning southwards in a more direct line, the Challenger again visited Bermuda, from which she proceeded eastward to the Azores, and thence to the Canary Islands and Cape de Verde, and whilst making a thorough investigation of the equatorial regions shaped an eccentric course to St. Paul's Rocks, Fernando Noronha, and Bahia, on the coast of Brazil. From Bahia she made for Tristan d'Acunha on her passage across the South Atlantic to the Cape of Good Hope, where, according to the antecedent calculation of the Hydrographic Department at the Admiralty, she arrived in December 1873.

'From the Cape it was proposed to examine the small groups of islands of Marion and Crozet, and to visit Kerguelen Land, from which the expedition was directed to proceed as far south as safety would permit in the neighbourhood of the Antarctic ice-barrier, and after a short survey to sail for Melbourne, Sydney, and the ports of New Zealand. If time and other circumstances would permit, it was intended again to proceed south, for the purpose of visiting the small islands of Campbell, Macquarie, Auckland, &c.; then again north, sailing to Friendly and Fiji Islands, onward through the Coral Sea; visiting the south coast of New Guinea, passing Torres Straits and the Arafura Sea, calling at Timor and Macassar, thence shaping our course through the Celebes and Sulu Seas to Manilla, which would probably be reached in November 1874.

From Manilla the Challenger was directed to sail eastward into the Pacific, calling at those little-frequented regions, the Pelew Islands, New Britain, New Ireland, and the Solomon Group, *en route* for Japan.

After leaving Japan, a course was to be taken across the Northern Pacific to Vancouver's Island, and thence southward through the eastern trough of the great ocean to Valparaiso, calling at Easter Island and Sala y Gomez. On leaving Valparaiso, it was proposed to return to the Atlantic through the Straits of Magellan, and by Rio Janeiro and St. Helena to England, which would probably be reached early in 1876. The globe will thus have been circumnavigated, and the great oceans traversed from north to south, and from east to west.'

This programme was carried out with a singular faithfulness, little of it having been modified or neglected in practice, and the anticipated time of return to British waters was so far kept that the Challenger ended her remarkable and interesting cruise on the 24th of May 1876, being the day on which she arrived at Spithead. A few days later she was paid off at Chatham.

However inviting the descriptions of photographic apparatus, of chemical laboratories, aquaria, and all the details of the paraphernalia of science may be, whether in repose or in expectant operation, we propose as a rule to detach ourselves from these; and to accompany, leave, and rejoin our voyagers off and on, at such points of their adventurous progress as may offer the most strange and salient characteristics of a social rather than of a technical order. Besides, are not these latter available to the full in official and other records?

Lord George Campbell comes of a stock, the members of two generations of which have been distinguished for their almost precocious achievements in literature. His father, the Duke of Argyll, was only nineteen years of age when he published his able and effective *Letter to the Peers from a Peer's Son;* and his

brother, the Marquis of Lorne, recently known in the milder regions of poesy, was only in his twenty-second year when, in 1867, he produced his account of *A Trip to the Tropics, and Home through America*, many passages of which were signalised by a considerable degree of political insight. To such family traditions Lord George Campbell is not unfaithful; and his pen is fresh, facile, vigorous, and happily and richly descriptive, of which the following passages may be taken as illustrative:

'On the 27th we sighted St. Paul's Rocks, steamed to leeward of them, and as there is no anchorage, sent boats with ropes and hawsers to the rocks, wound a rope round and round a bit of rock, made a hawser fast to that rope, and swung to it with a length of 75 fathoms of hawser, 104 fathoms of water under our bows, and there we comfortably lay for a day and two nights, made fast to a pinnacle of rock in the middle of the Atlantic!—something no other ship has ever done here before.

St. Paul's Rocks are a cluster of five separate craggy rocks, all lying close together in horse-shoe shape, the highest being about sixty feet high, which, as are also two other peaks rather less high, is coloured white from the birds, "boobies" and "noddies," which were sitting about on the rocks, flying over the ship, and close over the water in thousands. The sea lashed along the weather-side, tearing in foaming torrents through the openings, and dashing up clouds of spray. For these rocks lie right in the "equatorial current," which rushes past at the rate of three knots an hour; against this and the S.E. trade-wind our boats could make no headway, and one, having inadvertently got out of the friendly shelter of the rocks, was swept some distance to leeward.

Across a small cove a rope was stretched above water, made fast to which we fished that night from our boats. Excellent and most exciting fishing it was, excepting for the sharks, which were most exasperating, bolting off with the hooks in a hopelessly irresistible manner. "Cavalli" were almost the only kind of fish caught, great big fellows, and strong as horses. We also caught numbers of most unwelcome young sharks, too feeble to run away with the line; and then suddenly one felt a tremendous tug, nearly jerking our arms off, and away went the line through your fingers, hot as fire, until you took a turn with the line round something as the only chance of saving anything. Snap! and off goes a fine hook, bait, and any number of fathoms of fishing-line; but as we saw sharks from twelve to a few more feet long, this was not surprising. It was great fun hauling in fish as fast as we could, and we stayed there till the small hours of the morning.

Next day all hands landed—some to fish, some to take magnetic and sun observations. We landed inside the cove, which, although there was some tumble of a sea, was easy enough. Boobies and noddies were thick in some places, and anything more stupid and ridiculous than they were! Flying bang into one's face, or letting themselves be caught or shoved about, with no idea of flying away, but only uttering an indignant scream. Eggs were lying about all over the rocks, some in nests built of seaweed, cleverly stuck on and out from the face of the rock, and covered with a coating of hard white stuff, stalactites of which hung down all round. Bah! how they smelt, these birds and their nests, which were full of insects, and surrounded by the remains of small fish! But more usually the eggs were laid on the hard bare rock in ones or twos, never more, one only being the most common; the same nests, by the way, seem to be used year after year. At one spot several old boobies were squatting, which, as I came up to them, gravely ejected flying-fish fry from their stomachs and bills, screaming threateningly the while, as if making room for me there instead of the disgorged fish. In spite of sundry severe pecks, I pushed them aside, and found beneath small balls of white fluff, which glared fiercely and pecked feebly at me, though they were only just out of the egg. Several other fluff-balls were lying about by themselves, whose parents, perhaps, were fishing for them at sea.

The fishing from the rocks was capital, and we had only to throw in a hand-line and baited hook to catch a "cavalli," or gaily-coloured "parrot-fish," at once. The thickness of line did not the least matter; a crowd rushed at it instantly. Some of us fished with rods, and had excellent sport.'

The intellectual aristocracy of St. Paul's Rocks—of which two illustrations in Mr. Spry's work vividly convey the idea of an insular 'abomination of desolation'—in default of human inhabitants, seems to be represented by the crabs, whose cunning methods of life contrast very favourably with the stupidity of the boobies and noddies, which will fly 'bang into one's face,' and will allow themselves to be caught or kicked about, with no idea of flying away,

but only uttering an indignant scream. .

'But the crabs—those cheeky, exasperating, but intensely amusing, crabs! They swarm all over the rocks—everywhere; one instant invisible, hiding in the cracks and crannies; the next appearing, stealing up behind you, and clawing a piece of bait or fish much larger than themselves, and quietly making off. Catch a fish, throw it behind you, and presently a score of crabs are seen advancing warily, though not a crab may have been visible the second before.

And I solemnly declare I saw an ancient crusty-coated crab come in the course of his peregrinations to a crack some two feet wide at least, which, after girding up his loins, he deliberately jumped.

Frighten an old noddy from her nest, and a crab will at once sneak up sideways, looking at you fixedly the while with its long stalked eyes, claw the disgorged fish, and make away with it rapidly; chase it, and it is off like a shot, dropping the spoils.

Some of us thought the crabs probably ate the young birds, but I saw no proof of this; on the contrary, I saw many unattended balls of fluff, and no crabs were at them. Neither, I imagine, can they crack the eggs; perhaps they manage it, however, somehow, for their cunning exceeds belief.

If they are thrown into the sea, their efforts are frantic to reach the land, evidently knowing where safety lies; but you must first catch your crab, which is, however, impossible, unless you can first maim it by a blow of a stick, or somehow. How hot and exasperated I got chasing them! how I didn't swear! how, sitting down, I soon saw one eye, and then one claw, and then the other eye appear over a ledge of rock! how it watched me! how I remained breathless and still! how I then slyly drew my stick along! and how, finally, I violently struck at it! and how, after all, I only stung my arm, and didn't touch the crab! How, after cutting nice strips off a fish for bait, I, after a few minutes, turned round and found it all stolen! how I saw the robbers disappearing into cracks! how I threw my stick at one, and struck it by a piece of good luck! with what joy I threw it into the sea, and saw the fish rush at and devour it! Ha, revenge is sweet!'

Lord George Campbell is very graphic in his descriptions of the life, and especially of the bird-life, which he encountered at Tristan d'Acunha, and its neighbours, Inaccessible Island—where were found two young Germans, brothers, whose romantic story, told by each of our authors, is given at the greater length by Mr. Spry—and Nightingale Island, the ornithological pride of which is the 'mollymawk,' the current name for a small and beautiful species of albatross. The mollymawks are described as having a snow-white throat and breast, black wings and tail, the back of the head and neck tinted a pearly gray, a black bill with an orange streak along the top of the upper mandible, black eyes placed under a straight black eyebrow, which, with a soft edging of black around the eye, gives them an odd look, half fierceness, half gentleness. The contrast presented by these lovely birds, as, quietly dignified, they walked or sat on their high nests among the squatting screaming penguins below and surrounding them, is vividly wrought out by Lord George Campbell in several pages and passages of his volume. In one of these he shows how, having just battled through a colony of penguins in his descent of a precipitous hill in Nightingale Island, he enjoyed the momentary relief of finding himself in a space of open mossy ground, where

'There were no penguins, but numbers of mollymawks sitting on their nests, who clattered their bills, then gravely shook their heads as we came near. They have no notion of being frightened, though sometimes they will stand up when you approach, but always when doing so covering their egg with their broad-webbed foot. Amongst them we lunched, and very pleasant interesting company they were. The husbands strolled about, coming and going from the tussock which fringed the wood, quietly sitting beside their wives, and kissing them in a very loving and pretty way. It was the most charming picture of bird-life that I have ever seen; their motions were so gentle and quiet, the birds themselves so handsome in shape and plumage, and the silence so delicious in contrast with those howling fiends in the grass, while above us, eating the seeds and hopping among the branches, were thrushes and finches, and now and then a carrion-gull would perch there too: how you would have enjoyed it!

Afterwards we walked back to the rock,

where we had landed, a distance of several hundred yards through the densest part of the rookery, and ever to be remembered by me as the most awful walk I ever had.

The grass grew six feet high, matted and tangled, while thousands and thousands of penguins swarmed between the tufted stems. If ever we stopped to see where we placed our feet, instantly we were attacked by a host of infuriated harpies. Very fortunately for me I had encased my legs in gaiters, but there was an exposed inch between them and my knickerbockers—a very tender part, you know, just there—and I got horribly tweaked and digged at. You can have no conception how infuriated and bold they are when protecting their nests, rushing at our legs in crowds, and following us, pecking viciously. They were so thick that it was useless trying to avoid them; so one had just to tramp on as fast as possible, striking out forwards and sideways vigorously, every step knocking down, kicking, and treading on an india-rubbery substance, which, if you dare to look down, you will find is a penguin; or smash, smash, as you tread on eggs by the dozen; or—more dreadful still—squash, squash, as you tread on the small black creatures—horrible, horrible! But being a truthful narrator, I must chronicle these dreadful facts: add to all this the slippery dirty ground (it all reminded me of that line, "The slithy toves did gyre and gimble in the wabe"); the furies biting hard incessantly, reaching not only that inch of stocking aforesaid, but higher up, too, as I sunk into a hollow or hole; the deafening brayings, the overpowering stench, the clouds of small black flies, which, if one opened one's mouth, one was bound to swallow *en masse;* the hard work fighting, rifle in hand, through the matted grass; the not being able to see where one was going, or when it would all end: till suddenly we were stopped by finding ourselves on the brink of a low cliff, and uncommonly nearly over it we were too; but O, joy! we presently got to the open rocks again, and anything like the sense of relief! it was like escaping from the regions of the —you know!

This stretch of rock was covered with penguins, one stream coming from the grass and putting to sea, where they were jumping, splashing, and cleaning themselves in all directions, and the other stream landing and hopping into the rookery. Marvellous jumps they made in coming down to the rocks, doing a drop of three feet and more quite easily, bolt upright the whole time. They jump into the sea from off a ledge of rock feet foremost; and to see some hundreds go plump, plumping in together, is a truly delectable sight.

They landed very cleverly; as the wave came washing up against the rock, they came with it under water, shooting out of the depths in shoals, clinging on to the rocks by their feet, and when the wave receded the face of the rock was plastered with them, and before the next wave came they had clambered up in some wonderful fashion, helping themselves with their bills, but not with their flappers. The speed with which they darted away under water can only be compared to a "flash of greased lightning."

By stopping the two streams we caused a great number to collect in one place on the bare rocks; there must have been many more than a thousand packed close together and looking fixedly at us. Then, on being frightened, they all right-about-turned together, the massed ranks of white breasts and pink feet becoming suddenly a hopping crowd of slate-coloured things, with a thousand pairs of yellow crests shaking above them. On the open rocks they are mild enough, and don't think of pecking one. The greatest wonder of all is how they find their own nests among the thousands of others as thickly strewn as they well can be, or rather how the husbands and wives mutually recognise each other; for one is always left in charge. The number of these penguins has been a subject of argument; there must be at least several hundred thousand.'

After enjoying the hospitalities of the Cape of Good Hope, our voyagers proceeded on their devious course, trawling, hauling, and dredging all the way, and enlivened with squall and storm and icebergs, to Australia; which, after having approached the Antarctic Pole as near as seventy degrees of south latitude and in eighty degrees of east longitude, they sighted on the evening of the 16th of March 1874, the first land they had seen for forty days. On the following day they arrived off Melbourne, and anchored in the harbour of what Mr. Spry aptly calls 'one of the finest colonial cities England possesses.' The following paragraph is transcribed from Lord George Campbell:

'There was joy among us on arriving at Melbourne. Of gales, snow, icebergs, and discomfort generally, we had had enough, and the memory of a dinner I ate at the club the first evening, followed by the opera, yet lingers in my memory as one of the pleasantest experiences of a poorly-paid and laborious career. And yet that Southern cruise was well worth

the discomfort; the islands were delightful; the weather was, on the whole, very fine; while there are few people now alive who have seen such superb Antarctic iceberg scenery as we have.

One afternoon particularly is in my mind's eye at this moment. We are steaming towards the supposed position of land, only some thirty miles distant, over a glass-like sea, unruffled by breath of wind; past great masses of ice, grouped so close together in some cases as to form an unbroken wall of cliff several miles in length. Then, as we pass within a few hundred yards, the chain breaks up into two or three separate bergs, and one sees —and beautifully from the masthead—the blue sea and distant horizon between perpendicular walls of glistening alabaster white, against which the long swell dashes, rearing up in great blue-green heaps, falling back in a torrent of rainbow-flashing spray, or goes roaring into the azure caverns, followed immediately by a thundering *thud*, as the compressed air within buffets it back again in a torrent of seething white foam. We are all on deck, looking out for the American's land, about which we are now getting extremely sceptical. At six o'clock the pack-ice is sighted ahead, stretching away to right and left, and to the South Pole too, as far as we can see or know. Abaft us the sun —near his setting—is glowing out from among light golden clouds, the only ones in an almost cloudless sky; bathing sea and ice, both bergs and pack, and ship, all in a flood of soft yellow light. Ahead of the ship the pack is sparkling and shimmering; the sky pale blue, cold, and clear, revealing beneath it, as far as the masthead look-out can see, pack-ice and icebergs—a world of ice, but still no sign of land. So *then* we gave up "Termination Land" as being an optical delusion.'

At Melbourne the Challenger stayed for two weeks, during which Mr. Spry paid a visit to Ballarat, of the gold-mining operations of which he gives an interesting account; whilst Lord George Campbell and another officer stayed a week longer, rejoining the ship at Sydney. During this visit Lord George made excursions inland; his return from one of which is the occasion for a representation of a comical side of Victorian life, which has also a somewhat sinister significance of its own:

'On the third day we returned to Melbourne, this time in a cramped-up-with-people coach. During this drive we saw something of manhood suffrage, something which made us long for the day when the Radicals at home may have their own way. Every man, you must know, out here is vastly superior to every other man. A newly-elected member of Parliament, a pleasant-looking man of, one would say, the middle class (only there is no middle class out here), was hoisted on to the top of the coach amid the cheers of his electors—a doubtless most respectable, but also somewhat of a riffraff-looking, crowd, composed of, one would say, the lower classes (only there are no lower classes out here). One bottle-nosed (it was also flushed) individual, much to the danger of the M.P., whom he had assisted to hoist on the coach, now with hands in pockets, and his face wearing a smile of ineffable weakly joy, looked up, his head tremulous with admiration and brandy, and said, "*There* you are, old son!" A little further on a drunken publican, with dishevelled hair and doubtful pronunciation, rushed out, shook hands, and wished to know if "Old shunn, do ye shee daylightsh yetsh?" The new M.P. was very civil, but evidently did not like it much.

We noticed, too, a little Australian scene here and there; now it was a nurse wheeling a baby in a perambulator; they cross a wooden bridge over a deep side-gutter; the perambulator capsizes right over; out flies the baby, and tumbles all limply into the dry gutter-bed; nursery-maid picks it up, and proceeds quietly onward as if nothing of an extraordinary character had occurred; and now it was a boxful of oil-paints which they carelessly let fall from the coach-roof, the oils of different colours flowing on the ground indiscriminately. Everybody laughs, ladle up what they can of the paint, and pour it all into *one* pot, during which operation appears the consignee,—horror, despair, curses!

The heat was very great, whirlwinds of small flies drifting over the country, and we were very glad when, in the evening, we drove into Geelong.

M.P.'s out here get paid for their services, about 300*l.* a year. Many of them are, I am told, mere agents in the House for cliques of electors, and a five- or ten-pound note from some grateful individual, for whom his agent in the house has asked a question, is often accepted. During our stay, an M.P. in a public speech denied accusations of having received bribes, and added that he had *only* received turkeys—in number, I think, thirty! They have fine Houses of Parliament, the chambers within looking small; but they tell you that their room is two inches bigger in every direction than the House of Commons at home. This statement you bow to.'

Mr. Spry pays the following tribute of praise to the beauty of Sydney; to realise which his exquisite illustration of 'Sydney

from Pyrmont, Darling Harbour,' with its splendid bridge, materially assists us:

'I despair of being able to convey to the reader my own impression of the beauty of Sydney Harbour. I can call to mind no other place with such lovely glimpses of nature—nothing equal to it. Many beautiful scenes are to be met with in our own British Isles, but they dwarf into insignificance in comparison with this magnificent land-locked expanse of water and scenery spread out before us, extending in bays, coves, and rivers for some twenty miles inland, ramifying in every direction; its bold and rocky shores presenting a succession of picturesque and beautiful landscapes, in which every nook and headland is studded with elegant villas and snug cottages, surrounded with park-like grounds and gardens, full of orange-trees, bananas, and numberless semi-tropical plants, unfamiliar to the eye of the newly-arrived stranger.'

Leaving Sydney the Challenger proceeded on the survey between that city and New Zealand; and on the 28th of June sighted the Heads with their frowning cliffs, where the bold bluff, coming sheer down 3000 feet, receives the full shock of the South Seas. This was an introduction to the wild and grand scenery of New Zealand, to the telegraphic prospects of which Mr. Spry devotes an interesting paragraph:

'The special object of our visit was to ascertain the oceanic section between Sydney and Wellington. The information obtained removes the last elements of uncertainty in the matter of submarine telegraphy between Australia and New Zealand, for during some time past the Governments of the respective colonies have been negotiating on this subject. The soundings show that the depths increase gradually after leaving Sydney, but that the extreme deepness does not vary much for some hundreds of miles in mid-ocean, the water again decreasing as the coast of New Zealand is approached. For the greater part of the way across, the bottom was found to be very favourable for the repose of a light cable, it being composed of mud and sand. It is only when the shores of this coast are nearly reached that the bottom becomes of a somewhat doubtful character; a stronger cable will therefore be required for the shore end. In all probability, now that these correct data have been ascertained, we shall find very shortly that New Zealand, like the Australian colonies, will be in instantaneous communication with Europe and America.'

At Tongatabu, the principal island in the Friendly group, Mr. Spry says:

'We had frequent opportunities of seeing the king, who, since embracing Christianity, has taken the name of George Tabu; he and his queen, Charlotte, expressed a wish during our stay to have their portraits taken. This was attended to, and for the occasion their Majesties were got up in regal attire—George I. in naval uniform coat, with four gold-lace stripes surmounted with a crown, and laced trousers; while Queen Charlotte was attired in a light muslin costume of European make.

His Majesty is a tall, hale, old gentleman, at least eighty years of age, who doubtless during his early days saw much fighting, and was probably mixed up with most stirring affairs in his native land; for, in a conversation with his secretary or Prime Minister (who is an American gentleman), we were informed that during his younger days he had the reputation of being a distinguished warrior. But since embracing Christianity he has continued to devote himself to the business of State and the improvement of his subjects.'

Another picture of Polynesian royalty, this time of Fiji, is drawn in a few striking touches by Lord George Campbell, who says that a party of the Challenger's officers made a boat excursion to the large island of Bau, where the king lives, and found him, dressed in a waist-cloth, lying on his face in a hut reading the Bible. Not far off were the great stones against which they used to kill the sacrificial victims, battering their heads against them till dead. The same writer, moralising on the great change which has taken place in Fijian society, and even in the probable habits of his majesty himself, expresses his assured belief that the Fijians who live in the interior have still undoubted cannibalistic tendencies, a known case having occurred a year or two ago, and that where missionaries or other agents of civilisation have not penetrated, cannibalism is doubtless in full swing. And he assumes it as certain that every middle-aged Fijian knows well the flavour of human flesh, in-

cluding his Majesty Thakambau, the 'King of the Cannibal Islands.'

Leaving Fiji, the Challenger pursued her course by the New Hebrides, which offer, especially in the island of Abi, some of the most characteristic details of life in a primitive savage society at present attainable on this planet, until she reached Cape York, the uninviting north-eastern extremity of Australia; and thence, threading the islands and groups of islands that studded her route in the Eastern Archipelago, and of which we have very entertaining sketches from Lord George Campbell, made for Hong Kong, which she reached on the 16th of November 1874, and from which Captain Nares was summoned to take the command of the Arctic Expedition, his place on board the Challenger being filled by Captain F. T. Thomson, of the Modeste, then on the China station. Mr. Spry is exceptionally happy in his sketches of Hong Kong life and character, and he contributes the following sentences as giving an example of the quasi-religious life of the Chinese people:

'We enter a temple, whose outside is adorned with gilding and lacquer, and quaint designs of birds, animals, and unreal monsters.

They have a religion of some sort, as Wang Heng (a very intelligent Chinese with whom I was acquainted) assured me, with churches and endowments as in England; that is to say, they have the system, but not the faith. I had supposed all along that the curiously constructed temples, sacred to Joss, had more or less of a religious character about them, but I was now undeceived. My habit on passing these edifices was to call in and see what was going on, and one day I found out that Joss was nothing more than a fortune-teller, after the manner of the Oracle of Delphos.

When inside the temple we see the figure of Joss placed on high, with ornaments of peacocks' feathers, whilst long streamers of coloured ribbon, pictures, and flowers; presents of tea, oil, or opium; lighted tapers in coloured wax; joss sticks burning slowly, and sending their perfume around; heaps of joss paper smouldering in trays; bamboo boxes with bundles of small sticks, on the end of which are inscribed certain cabalistic characters, surround the figure. At certain hours in the morning the temple becomes sacred. It is the hour of divination. Any one now about to undertake a journey or make a purchase, and desirous of knowing if he will arrive in safety or make a profitable investment, comes to Joss. He pays his obeisance by profoundly bowing and salaaming; then lights a certain number of matches or tapers, and makes a present. After a while, when it is thought Joss is conciliated, the suppliant takes the box of marked sticks, and, after shaking them about, selects half a dozen, and passes them to the priest or Sheong-ti (son of heaven) in attendance, who refers to the book of mysteries, and there reads the will of Joss. If he is warned of misfortune, he forbears the journey or declines the bargain, and waits for a more fortunate day. If Joss advises otherwise, and a good profit is the result, the happy merchant makes a substantial present. Joss is, therefore, as will be seen, a fortune-teller, and nothing more, and Sheong-ti is only a sensible cunning fellow, who prefers to live by the credulity of his neighbour rather than by the labour of his hands.'

The expedition left Hong Kong on the 6th of January 1875, the Challenger retracing her way, with a difference, in a south-easterly direction, by Manilla, Zebu, Camiguin, and Samboanga (Philippine Islands), to Humboldt Bay, situated about the middle of the north coast of New Guinea, moving so far along a track with the social and other peculiarities of which the reading public has in one form or another been recently made more or less familiar. In this most interesting and beautiful bay Mr. Spry says,

'The ship was surrounded by about eighty canoes, each manned by half a dozen savages, armed with bows, arrows, spears, and stone hatchets. It was decided to shift our position for one farther up the bay; and as the screw made its first revolution, the astonished natives pointed their arrows at it, as if they expected some enemy to rise from the foaming waters. Slowly we steamed on our way, followed by all the canoes on starboard and port sides doing their utmost to keep pace with us.

At this moment the scene before us was probably the most novel and most impressive of all that had been witnessed in the course of the expedition. Above a sunny sky, swept by a morning breeze; in the background the hilly shores of the bay,

covered with the most luxuriant foliage, the trees crowding down to the water's edge, and dipping their boughs into the white breakers; around us a moving mass of dark-brown figures, some decked with leaves, flowers, and birds' feathers, others in enormous frizzled wigs, and all the savage glory of war-paint, breastplates, bows, and arrows—all joining in a monotonous chant, in unison with the sound of the conch-shell; in the centre the Challenger, at this moment the only representative of Western civilisation in this rarely visited region—a period of two thousand years of progress separating us from the people we had come to see.'

A lively trade soon sprang up between the ship's company and the savages, who in their bargaining were generally very honest, although one or two of the Challenger's boats in attempting to land had everything portable stolen amid demonstrations of threatening and hostility. The people of the Admiralty Islands, of whom Lord George Campbell's account is very novel and picturesque, were as eager to trade as those of New Guinea, and were at the same time more open and hospitable, allowing the Englishmen to land freely, but possibly having a sort of physical craving after their visitors of a kind which the latter could scarcely be expected to favour. Mr. Spry writes:

'In all our researches and wanderings over the islands we saw no signs of graves, nor could we ascertain with any degree of certainty how they disposed of their dead. From signs they made, such as placing a large earthern vessel on the fire, and indicating that they cut off parts of the body, place in the vessel, and afterwards eat them, our suspicions were aroused that they honour the memory of their friends and relations by eating them. At all events, they had no objection to sell human skulls, of which several were procured, and no sacrifice seemed too great for them if they could only get hold of that priceless material—iron hoop.

We have no record of any visit of Europeans to these islands since that of D'Entrecasteaux, in 1792, who did not land, and could not prevail on any of the natives to visit his vessel. But from the first we seemed to have established a good understanding, and our stay was sufficiently long to render us familiar with the faces of our daily visitors. Their conduct seemed always cheerful and friendly, and they had no objection to come on board and submit to the processes of being photographed, weighed, and measured.'

On the 10th of March 1875 the Challenger shaped her course for Yokohama, with the intention of reaching Guam, one of the Ladrone Islands, which, owing to baffling winds, were, however, passed some hundred leagues to the westward. It is of an incident of this passage that Mr. Spry has the following interesting sentences:

'On the 23d March, in lat. 11° 24′ north, and long. 143° 16′ east, bottom was touched at 4475 fathoms, the deepest successful sounding made during the whole cruise. Specimens from that depth showed a dark volcanic sand, mixed with manganese. In consequence of the enormous pressure at that depth (some five tons on the square inch) most of the thermometers were crushed. However, one stood the test, and showed a temperature of 35·9°, the surface temperature being 80°. Three other attempts were made to determine the temperature of water at these great depths, but in every instance the instruments came to the surface in a damaged condition.'

Both Mr. Spry and Lord George Campbell, and especially the latter, devote much space to the illustration of life in Japan, whether of the town, village, or mountain country; the methods of travelling; the extent to which the Japanese have been Europeanised; the manners, furniture, attendants, and accommodation of tea-houses, and the culinary wonders of a Japanese hotel dinner; the quality of saké and the effects of drinking it; the singing and dancing girls, whose performances are the staple evening amusement of the Japanese; the religious edifices, shrines, temples, and burial-places; the singular amenities of Japanese quarrels, and their freedom from 'bad language;' the physical and mental characteristics of the people; their street and domestic architecture; their arts and industries; their theatres, exhibitions, archery-galleries, and other amusements; and the plains

and the mountains, the fauna and the flora, of a country by which they seem to have been fascinated.

Amongst other recreations Lord George Campbell had the honour of being presented to the Mikado; an event which he thus describes:

'I must tell you how a deputation of us was presented to the Mikado, who is now living in some prince's house, outside the fortified grounds within which his own palace was the other day accidentally burnt. We went in three carriages, and in full dress, the Ambassador's English escort riding ahead and in rear. Arrived at the palace, having driven past guards of soldiers, and through walls covered with grass-turf, we were received by the household officials, dressed in uniforms of European fashion. In the room where we wait, which has the usual painted-paper walls, is a table and handsome gold-lacquered chairs. We sit down and smoke. Sir H. Parkes goes in first, and delivers an autograph letter from the Queen—just received, after which we all troop in in Indian file, very fine! We walk through several rooms until we arrive in that where the Mikado is standing by the side of a chair. We bow as we enter, range ourselves in line; bow again, and advance diagonally (this formation consequent, I imagine, on the shyness of those on the left of the line); the Minister on the right front extreme, I almost on the left rear extreme. Three steps, and bow! three more steps forward, and again bow!! three more, and again bow!!! and yet three more, and again bow!!!! By this time we have arrived close to the Son of Heaven, who stands quite motionless. The Minister has the honour to present us one by one; we bow low as our names are recited. The Mikado does not speak (I think), but one of the attendant officials says that the Mikado is very glad to see us. He does not look like it, neither bowing, smiling, nor speaking, according, I doubt not, to Eastern etiquette, but that of the Western world, I can testify, is much pleasanter. We retire as we entered, only backwards this time, and it is all over. The Mikado's uniform is rather good, well cut, gold-striped white trousers, and a swallow-tailed coat laden with gold embroidery.'

In taking his leave of Japan Lord George Campbell advises 'all those who wish to travel and find real novelty of scene combined with comfort and cleanliness to visit Japan. Other lands there are more utterly strange and romantic, but they lie far outside the ordinary "*globe-trotter's*" way.'

The rest of the cruise of the Challenger need scarcely detain us, embracing as it did a visit to Valparaiso, by way of the Sandwich Islands, the Society Islands, and Juan Fernandez; a passage through the Straits of Magellan, and a detour to the Falkland Islands; a prolonged stay at Monte Video and Buenos Ayres; a week's sojourn at Ascension, and a second visit to the Cape de Verde Islands. Leaving these last, the Challenger kept well to the west of the Azores, which she doubled abruptly on her way to Vigo, the last place of anchorage until she found the next at Spithead, as has been already mentioned, on the 24th of May 1876, after an absence from English waters of three years and a half.

THE ENVIRONS OF PARIS.
A LANDSCAPE BY COROT.

LANDSCAPE MEMORIES.

No. II. THE ENVIRONS OF PARIS.

WHO would deem we were so near the city,
We three who have known its grief and gladness!
Which of all its dwellers would spare pity
For us, or would laugh less for our sadness?

Tall red pine-stems glowing, in the sinking
Of the sun, like candles at the altar,
Music in the boughs that brings more thinking
Than the measured chanting of the psalter.

Fir-trees like great banner-poles that, braving
Crash of Nature's war, stand firm and strong,
Never bending underneath the waving
Of the dark-plumed shade that lasts so long.

Ah, my dears, the leaves all brown, that rustle
Underneath your feet where'er you tread,
Have not pass'd more from this world's dull bustle
Than my weary heart, are not more dead.

Spring is fair when hopes are at their budding,
Summer fairer when the hope grows ripe;
But when autumn rains the world are flooding,
Who shall blame if thought of winter gripe?

Yet a golden light strikes through the branches,
Telling of past days and bliss to come,
And the balm-scent of the pine-wood staunches
Wounds, and bids the heart be calm and dumb.

And it may be there will come a season,
When the pine-trees' stem, and scent, and shade,
Shall have meaning more than passes reason—
In some brighter, now half-fancied, glade!

B. MONTGOMERIE RANKING.

FIFTY YEARS A CRICKETER.

By the Author of 'The Cricket-Field.'

V.

I never can walk about Lord's without some such reflections as may be supposed in Rip Van Winkle after his sleep of twenty years: the present and the past come in such vivid contrast before my mind. There is this peculiarity about Lord's as suggestive of such sobering reflections,—in other haunts, as in the parks and fashionable promenades, the frequenters change—two or three seasons satisfy the many; but not so at Lord's. Once a cricketer, always a cricketer—as a looker-on at least—is a rule with the fewest possible exceptions. Hundreds do we see there year after year—men who, if not found at Lord's, you may be sure are not in London, nor even within an easy distance.

There are three favourite matches — the Universities, the Gentlemen against the Players, and Eton against Harrow—where we look forward with some confidence to seeing certain old friends whom we never hope to meet otherwise.

As I walk round the ground I ruminate sometimes on the failing health and the altered figures of men. There is an old chum, who at school rejoiced in the name of Hedge-stake, because he was about the shape of one, now weighs fifteen stone, 'larding the lean earth as he walks along.' There is Sir F., once pointed out to me by Mr. William Ward—and they used to point out Mr. E. H. Budd—as the finest man in combined activity and strength who ever came to Lord's; but now his watchchain plumbs a perpendicular almost clear of his toes. Then I see gouty-men with sticks; and, saddest of all, paralysed men in chairs. Nor can I forget the gradual change time wrought in Lord Frederic Beauclerc. At first I used to see his lordship taking a bat to show some tyro 'how fields were won;' then after a few seasons, in which he sat in the pavilion as the Nestor of the M.C.C., he was fond of leaning on some friend's arm, or seeking a sheltered corner and shrinking from every breeze; and last of all he used to appear in his brougham, his health and strength fast failing, with a lady nurse at his side.

Poor Felix died, since my first paper appeared in these pages, on the 3d of September in Dorsetshire, having survived his sad attack of paralysis nearly twenty years. I often tried, but never could prevail on him to take my arm; and even 'from the loophole of his retreat' just to sit still with me, and to criticise and compare play present and past on those fields where once he had been the one man people came to see. 'No,' he said, 'old recollections, and I fear old friends too, will crowd around; the gap is too wide, the fall is too great, it would upset me quite.'

Yes, that ring at Lord's shows me every gradation in the scale of life —the once active stiff and heavy, the youthful gray, the leaders of great elevens passing unrecognised and alone. Every old cricketer knows by sight, and is himself known to, hundreds from frequenting Lord's — people who

seem to him as distinct and as peculiar to those haunts as if he returned periodically to another land.

And pass but a few miles off, and see how different are the natives at the Oval. The pavilions differ not more widely in their architecture than in their company. Some few faces are common to both; but there is a City look about the one, and a West-end look about the other. At the Oval, men seem to have rushed away with some zest from their City offices. At Lord's there is a *dilettante* look, as of men whose work, if ever, has yet to come. Even the ring at the Oval and the ring at Lord's have their own decided characters too. The men of labour, no less than the men of leisure, have their style, and in their very cut, and even their very pipes, and in their toggery, you mark the Surrey-side as distinct from the West-end holiday-maker. And here I do not mean to speak unkindly. Why should not the busy bee be distinct from certain other little creatures that buzz about the human hive?

The first twelve years I knew Lord's, from 1836-1848, Mr. William Ward was a constant attendant, and to not a few he represented a bygone generation.

Mr. Ward began to play in 1810, and not only continued—unlike Lord Frederic Beauclerc, who then retired—the game after the change to round-arm bowling, but Mr. Ward was one of the very few old players who acquitted himself creditably in the new style. The large powerful figure of Mr. Ward, with heavy massive brow, is one never to be erased from the memory of those who knew him. Considering his business habits—a City merchant and Bank of England director, and once an M.P. and not unknown from his speeches in the House—not a few were surprised that such a mind could be so engrossed and so enthusiastically devoted to cricket.

Lord's to Mr. Ward was a British institution. He was as full of the subject of play as it was, and as sanguine and interested as a boy.

From one memorable act of generosity London, and indeed all England, owes much to Mr. Ward. It was Mr. Ward who came forward at a most critical moment and bought the lease of Lord's, and that too at a heavy price, and saved the ground from being long since covered with Corinthian villas. Mr. Ward was an old Wykehamist, and as such was very proud of the achievements of his school; and at his mansion in Bloomsbury-square, a fashionable square in those days, he annually gave a Wykehamist supper, and stood *loco parentis*, housing the eleven. At this supper he had the good sense to treat boys as boys, and not to spoil their play for the morrow: he gave them sherry-and-water, and nothing stronger. Not so another hospitable gentleman, who, as to the supper, followed Mr. Ward's example. 'Here champagne was handed profusely,' said my friend, 'which I, for one, had positively never tasted before; and the consequence was, that I was found fast asleep at one o'clock in the morning of the second day of the Winchester match, in the middle of St. John's Wood-road, and carried to the station-house as most truly "drunk and incapable" by Policeman X!' No wonder then that, after such folly and irregularities in London life, Winchester ceased to put in an appearance at Lord's.

This was the less to be regretted, because they had for some time

played at a disadvantage, from the fact that they were more distant from town, and, breaking-up earlier than Eton and Harrow, they could rarely command their best eleven. And till 1850 the Wykehamists had no professional. In that year they were first allowed to hire one, and retained old Lillywhite. Lilly said at once, 'You are all for batting. Where's the good of that when you can't bowl, and always have a heavy score against you?' So he taught bowling, and trained a wicket-keeper; and the result was that in 1851 Winchester beat both Eton and Harrow at Lords', after a long series of defeats.

As to Eton and Harrow also, there was a time when, from extravagant entertainments, and also from 'the old fellows' initiating the younger into the mysteries of London life, the head-master of Eton would bear this responsibility no longer, and positively refused to allow his pupils to play at Lord's; and therefore for two years there was no School match at Lord's. At that time I ventured, by request, an article in a newspaper, advising old Etonians to offer to act, like Mr. Ward, *loco parentis*, and insure the safety of the eleven. Almost immediately an arrangement was made; the match is now played before the school breaks up, and all has gone harmoniously ever since.

The School match has from year to year been attended by increasing numbers, till at last, like the University boat race, it has almost merged its original character in the festivities to which it has given rise. It is now a London picnic, an event, like Goodwood, to wait for and prolong the London season. Still there is some good play to be seen, and above all an earnestness and soul to win which makes even good judges pleased to look on; and while there is a fair field —though rather circumscribed— and no favour, and the only complaint is that children of an older growth are made as happy as the boys, why should we complain?

Mr. William Ward is chiefly known to the present generation as having made 278 runs, the largest score known in cricket, at least in any match of note. Marsden's innings of 227, in Sheffield and Leicester against Nottingham in 1826, was long deemed a great feat, and compared favourably with Mr. W. Ward's 278 against an eleven decidedly inferior to Marsden's opponents. This score was beaten by Alfred Adams of Saffron Walden, in 1837, who scored 279, one more than Mr. Ward. Adams stood the head of all scores till Mr. Tylecourt scored at Clifton College 402, and Mr. W. G. Grace 400, against twenty-two in the field.

As to the score of Mr. Tylecourt of Clifton College, it was really remarkable, because the two sides were supposed well matched, and he played with worthy compeers. The bowling too was equal to the average of the College bowling, on which he had been formed and trained, and the innings extended over several play-hours. This I took the trouble to ascertain, because it had been represented that Mr. Tylecourt's was only a case of the big boy fagging the little ones. It was in reality the fair innings of a schoolboy with respectable school-play.

Mr. Ward's innings was made against Norfolk, by no means a strong eleven, though Mr. E. H. Budd—a man given—bowled. Fuller Pilch, a youth of seventeen, played for Norfolk his first match at Lord's. Mr. Budd told me

that Mr. Ward was missed an easy catch before he had scored thirty; but his competitors in long scores no doubt were missed too.

And what style of play was Mr. Ward's? A most efficient style, no doubt, as he scored more, in good matches, than any man of his day. One reason was that he cared more about it; he played for his average, or at least for his credit (for averages were less calculated in those days), as well as for the game. Beldham said to me, 'As to my score, I could never half play unless runs were wanted, and very few good players ever can.' We all know that after seventy or eighty runs, men are often venturesome, and think they have done enough. It required a man of Mr. Ward's cricketing enthusiasm, as well as of his skill, to stand batting into the third day. He was a powerful forward and driving player, with long reach, playing quite upright and straight, and with good judgment. He practised steadily, and made quite a serious business of his practice. 'He once,' said Caldecourt, 'gave me a guinea, because, discovering a weak point in his play, I bowled him out twice one morning.' Mr. Ward would also practise at eighteen or nineteen yards, instead of twenty-two, to increase his difficulty. After that he found play at twenty-two yards comparatively easy. Still Mr. Ward was powerful rather than elegant. Lord F. Beauclerc said invidiously, 'He was too big to play at cricket.' But as for efficiency, late in life he astonished the Cantabs by the way in which he drove back Mr. Kirwan's swiftest bowling; Mr. Ward, however, well remembered Osbaldeston and Brown, who were even faster still. Mr. Mynn also found in 'old Ward' a stubborn and unflinching antagonist.

But of the amateur batsmen of that day, Mr. Charles Taylor was the favourite, with ladies as well as gentlemen. His was an elegant style of play—and looked like play, and not like a serious and painful operation, as is too common; ladies said he looked so happy with it, so natural and so much at ease. Caldecourt was the first of umpires then, and the very best of cricket tutors; a man of good sense, nor did I ever know a better judge of the game; and Caldecourt used to say that in the style of Mr. Charles Taylor, and in the difference between him and other players, he saw Lord Frederic Beauclerc over again. His lordship stood foremost as a study in Caldecourt's early days, and Mr. Taylor in Caldecourt's later life.

Lord Frederic played for thirty-five seasons, and was good to the last. When fifty-four years of age he scored sixty-five against Ashby, the best bowler of his day. He was one of the most regular attendants at Lord's for sixty years. His son Charles played with me in the first of the University matches, in 1836, and hit a ball which struck above the windows at the public-house, a little higher than a mark which Lord Frederic pointed out as recording a celebrated hit by Mr. E. H. Budd. Lord Frederic was a first-rate match runner, second only to Mr. Budd. A match was one day projected between them, unknown to Mr. Budd, for a heavy stake. 'But,' said Budd, 'I unintentionally marred this by indulging his lordship with a short spin and trial of speed, which convinced him he had no chance.'

One curious story of Mr. Ward. On his way to a match in Sussex he lost his watch. A year after, the watch was found in a fagot by a cook while lighting the fire.

The fagot proved to have been cut from a hedge over which Mr. Ward had crossed.

The B. matches were curious and notable in the early part of this century—played for twenty-six years. The best players happened to have the initial B to their names: Beldham, Budd, Beauclerc, Beagley, and Bentley were great names indeed. There were also Barton, Bennett, Bridger, Burgoyne, Captain Beckett, Bowyer, Brande, Brown, Broadbridge, Bailey, Burt, Barnett, Sir F. Bathurst, Box, Broughton. The B.s played in all twelve matches; the first in 1805, the last in 1837. Beagley played in 1816 and 1837, and E. H. Budd in 1805 and 1831.

During all the years of which I am treating, the pavilion, whether at the old ground, the first Lord's where now is Dorset-square, or at its present site, contained worthy rows of true cricketers, past and present—of true lovers of the game, and of men who, by public-school or university as well as by cricket ties, had that bond of sympathy and fellow feeling for one joint pursuit which is the *idem velle* and the *idem nolle* not more of Sallust's Roman than of more modern days. To that state I am happy to hear that, from their new system of elections, the Marylebone Cricket Club is in a fair way of fast returning. It is believed that the great responsibilities the members undertook in securing the ground made them less particular in requiring some cricket qualification in their elections. Money—money, and subscriptions in every form—is a great impediment to the purity of cricket, no less than of more mundane commodities; but happily the present state of the funds of the M.C.C., in spite of their spirited outlay, justifies an independent course, and we once more see this club the most enjoyable summer club society has ever known.

As to gate-money, and playing for the pot, it is cruel to see how it operates in spoiling a match. The first I ever heard of the gate-money interfering with the management of a match was, much to my surprise, at the famous North and South match, when Mr. Mynn was so distinguished at Leicester. The publican told me that he had the privilege of putting the men in, and divided the great batsmen between the two days! Very *infra dig.* for Lord Frederic and the Marylebone Club, by whom it was sanctioned.

Then why do we always have a dinner in the middle of a match? as if players could be worth much after the usual pies and salads, lobsters and custards! Certainly every player can find time for all the luncheon any real cricketer requires; but here again the profit of 'the ground' is too often the consideration, and we waste an hour each day. More time in late commencing and loitering is wasted from the same cause. The match seems purposely made to last and draw sixpences for the third day.

If the game is naturally so long, every means should be taken to save time. But commonly half an hour is wasted before beginning, and half an hour more at luncheon; and if you reckon five minutes for every man who goes in, multiplied by forty for the two innings a side, you have a loss of three hours and twenty minutes more; and to this often we must add half an hour for unnecessary waste of time between the innings. In many matches, especially at the Oval, and wherever the players have an interest in making a three days' match or in playing

for a drawn game, from four to five hours that might have been saved are wasted in every match.

Let me suggest a timekeeper, or special instructions to the umpire; also a special agreement between clubs as to time, and the rule that every batsman going in shall meet the batsman coming out half way.

Nay more; I am credibly informed that in twenty-two matches, and other pothouse fixtures, the object is not to get some great player of the day out, but the contrivance is rather how to keep him in; and some youngster not worth putting up to the secret, who happened to be exulting in a catch that disposed of a formidable antagonist, was surprised at being far from complimented, but called a goose and a meddler for his pains!

At Lord's, the dinner-time is only half an hour, and time is fairly kept—that is, there is no intentional delay; but at the Oval the matches are far less satisfactory to the lovers of cricket; and even looking to the receipts this is questionable policy. We may be sure that strict play will prove the more attractive in the end, and increase the number of spectators.

All this results from professional cricket and professionals. Professionals are now numerous indeed. To a limited extent they date from an early period. Gentlemen become naturally interested in, if not attached to, those who have excited their admiration by their play, rejoiced in the same triumphs, or sympathised in the same defeats. Many an old cricketer in early times ended his days in a keeper's lodge, or held some sinecure on an estate, as I said of old Fennex at the beautiful gardens of Benhall.

The Duke of Dorset, in the last century, had three professionals, Miller, Minshull, and W. Bowra, among the best of their day. The Earl of Tankerville had Bedster, and the celebrated Lumpy, so well known to the readers of 'Old Nyren.' Sir Horace Mann retained George Ring as his huntsman and John Ring as his whipper-in, while Mr. Amherst employed Boxall to bowl to him all the winter in a barn.

But these were feudal times, and such engagements depended on local ties. With cricketers, as with servants, there is naturally little interest on either side where railways whirl attendants perhaps a hundred miles, and master and servant meet as utter strangers to each other. So we have seen painful instances of broken-down professionals, too old for play, and never trained to work, friendless and alone.

It is remarkable that no single professional of eminence ever came from Oxford, though Fenner, Buttress, Hayward, Carpenter, and Tarrant remind us of Cambridge practice on Parker's Piece.

It is also observable that over a long series of years no cricketer of any note has ever been numbered with the criminal classes of the country.

As to cricket in foreign parts, the earliest and most remarkable notice of it is found in the *Diary of Henry Teonge, Chaplain on board his Majesty Charles II.'s Ships Assistance, Bristol, and Royal Oak*, A.D. 1675-1679.

'This morning early, 6th May 1676' (near two hundred years ago), 'as is the custom all the summer long, at least forty of the English, with his worship the consul, rode out of the city' (Antioch) 'about four miles, to a fine valley by a river-side, to recreate themselves. There a princely tent was pitched, and we had several pastimes and sports, as duck-hunting, fishing,

shooting, hand-ball, *Cricket*, and then a noble dinner, brought thither with great plenty of all sorts of wines, punch, and lemonade; and at six o'clock we returned, all in good order, but soundly tired and weary.'

But to come nearer to modern practice, nearly one hundred years ago we read of an attempt to astonish the natives in France with an All-England Eleven.

The Duke of Dorset was ambassador to France in 1784, and wrote to Yalden, captain of the County Eleven at Chertsey, to select an eleven to go over and show a specimen of the game at Paris. The eleven were got together, and had actually travelled as far as Dover, with the Earl of Tankerville at their head, when they unfortunately met the Duke of Dorset coming home. He was flying before the first outbreak of the French Revolution.

About sixty years passed away, when Mr. Pickering—the gentleman famed as the finest field at cover ever seen, for he could return a ball indifferently as he picked it up right or left—being in the United States, arranged a series of matches with an All-England Eleven.

This eleven was a very powerful one. It comprised Hayward, Carpenter, George Parr, Diver, E. H. Stephenson, Lockyer, Caffyn, Grundy, Wisden, Julius Cæsar, and John Lillywhite. Every man could bat well and field well; and though as bowlers there were Jackson, Wisden, Hayward, Caffyn, and Grundy, worthy of any eleven, still Parr's slow bowling proved sometimes more effective still, because, as we have often seen, slows when new are not as easy as they seem.

Soon after, Messrs. Spiers & Pond arranged with the then secretary of the Surrey Club to choose an eleven for a series of matches in Australia, and an eleven not so worthy of England went out, with Griffith, T. Hearne, Roger Iddison, Lawrence, E. Stephenson, Bennett, and Mortlock. A sheriff's officer appeared at the last moment on board at Gravesend, and it was with difficulty that Mr. Miller, who happened to be present, could collect cash, as cheques were refused, to settle the affair. The man in danger returned with about 400*l.* in pocket from the trip, a lucky hit for a man so impecunious to have missed! This speculation was followed in 1863 by an eleven chosen by George Parr, at that time captain of the Nottingham eleven, with Mr. E. M. Grace, Hayward, Carpenter, Tarrant, Parr, Jackson, R. C. Tinley, Alfred Clarke, Caffyn, Julius Cæsar, Tom Lockyer, and Anderson. This was as good an eleven as to professionals as could be found, save that Daft was conspicuous by his absence.

The first Australian venture had been so remunerative to the contractors, that these players thought they could make better profits in the same way for themselves. But here they were met by a difficulty. The business part of the matter was not so easy to manage in a strange land. Messrs. Spiers & Pond could command the several cricket-grounds, and manage and check the gate-money; and last, not least, could not only advertise with effect, but give *éclat* to their venture, by their knowledge of men and manners, and by their own personal influence.

I was not, therefore, surprised to hear, when a costly grandstand was required and no one knew whom to trust, that the difference between the attendance and the profits was wide indeed. One of the

eleven told me that on one great occasion, when the ground was crowded by thousands, and the grandstand filled with five-shilling tickets, they were disappointed in their calculations to the extent of 2000*l.*! Still the result amply rewarded them for their exertions, and the choice of the eleven gave the greatest satisfaction.

Not so the next eleven, when Messrs. W. G. Grace and G. F. Grace headed a mixed eleven of Players and Gentlemen. The Australians, as predicted by Parr, who formed a high opinion of their promise in 1863, now proved cricketers of no mean reputation. They complained that there was no wicket-keeper worthy the name, and no such bowling as they had seen with Jackson and Tinley. I presume they had learnt slow bowling since they tried Tinley; for Southerton is generally found far more efficient; just as Parr, whose slows were of the most moderate kind, had proved serviceable in America. The names at length were Messrs. W. G. and G. F. Grace, Gilbert, Bush, and Boult; and as professionals, Jupp, Pooley, Southerton, Oscroft, M. M'Intyre, Andrew Greenwood, and J. Lillywhite. In the play of Messrs. Grace no one could be disappointed, but altogether things did not go well. Painful remarks in the Australian newspapers reached home, naming those whom the colonists did not desire to see again. If the side was weak, strong liquors sometimes made it weaker, and we feared that the game of cricketing in foreign parts was marred for the future.

But not so. Speculators in cricket could discriminate between the abuse and the use of a venture, and contracted for an eleven exclusively professional, as the only means, I presume, of insuring a list of names that had really excited the curiosity and the interest of Sydney or of Melbourne. For such names as Gilbert, Bush, and Boult had not at that time extended their fame to the antipodes. A stronger side for the out-play could not be found than is implied in the following: Lillywhite (captain), Alfred Shaw, Selby, Jupp, Pooley, Southerton, Emmett, Ulyett, Greenwood, Armitage, Hill, and Charlwood. Here are names most known, and the strongest bowling eleven, but certainly the weakest batting. Sides of twenty-two, by the mere chances of the game, usually make a considerable score; and since they often catch and stop as well as others, I fear that to cut through a crowded field requires a little more hitting power than this eleven can display. But no doubt this eleven is fairly chosen, and must give satisfaction.

Lockwood, Daft, Oscroft, and Shrewsbury are names we miss; but *linquenda domus et placens uxor*, or, as one of them expressed it, 'I would go, only my wife is a married woman, and fears the perils of the sea.'

Since writing the above remarks, all cricketers know that the eleven—ten of them, at least—have reached England; and the eleventh, too, we hope, will shortly follow, being much wanted by Surrey.

A SAUNTER ON THE SOUTH DOWNS.

'The lofty curves of the chalk downs, grand steadfast forms, played over by the changing days.' *Daniel Deronda.*

Even had I not been a Londoner, I think the South Downs would always have exercised an immense fascination over me; but as it is, having been born well within the sound of Bow Bells, they seem to form the nearest approach to what may be called my native mountains. No other country within an hour and a half's railway run from the metropolis ever inspires me with the same complete sense of change and freedom. None has any equally distinctive character, or can be compared as suggesting the open solitude and wildness of a mountainous district. One hears 'the Downs' commonly called barren and uninteresting; but this can only be the opinion of people who have a very indifferent care and limited love for natural beauties, and whose only notion of rural scenery is summed up in the words 'green fields.' The contemptuous way in which 'Downland' is spoken of by these folk, because there are no trees nor any water, proves that they are blind to most country attractions, except such as usually accompany a trip to Richmond or Hampton Court, and which are to be found concentrated at the Star and Garter, or any like hostelry. But given a true love for Nature in all her broad and varied phases—and surely here we have her in a very especial and lovable one—and I cannot understand how anybody with an average strength of wind and limb can fail to enjoy a ramble over the undulating sweeps and hollows which are known as the South Downs. Given, too, but a fairly active imagination, and it is not difficult to fancy, as I have hinted, that we are wandering at least on the skirts of a mountainous region.

I know not if this affection of mine for these 'grand steadfast forms,' as George Eliot calls them, had not its birth in those Brighton schooldays, when one contrived surreptitiously at times to follow on foot the mild evolutions of the Brighton harriers. Any way the love has lasted. Notwithstanding the fact that since then the plough has made tremendous inroads upon the springy turf, and turned into dusty, chalky, flinty ruts many a hitherto boundless sweep of smooth and slippery grass, whilst bricks and mortar have encroached from the outskirts of all the towns and villages abutting upon the Downs, there is yet to be found sufficient of solitude, of precipitous ascent, broken form, high ridge, bold shoulder, secluded valley, lofty summit, and extensive view, to preserve the 'native mountain' notion. Exaggeration, when applied to this purpose of mine, of turning these molehills into mountains, is peculiarly edifying. Why should it be denied to a Londoner more than to a Scotchman to 'puff up his own hills'? They are the best he has near at hand; and he should be accounted lucky if he be able to create for himself out of such simple materials the joy which a Highlander feels in

tramping over his favourite heather.

Let any sturdy Southron, who is denied the opportunity of enjoying the real article in the North, see if he cannot find a fair substitute in the South. Let him come with me, to begin with, say to the coast-line of the Downs in the neighbourhood of Eastbourne. He has but to give the spur to his imagination, and he will find a succession of details answering to much that environs 'the heaven-kissing' hills. There is the flat and marshy plain, with a populous and busy town upon the water's edge; as we leave it by a pretty suburb, there is the gradually ascending road, winding beneath lofty elms and amidst bosky hedge-rows. If it be the right season, there will be waving wheat and barley rustling pleasantly in the opener places, and everywhere through the gaps and vistas of the arching avenue are to be had peeps of what we leave below—the plain, the town, the sea. Steeper and steeper grows the hill and scantier the foliage, whilst the silence and solitude increase, notwithstanding the occasional roadside cottage or lodge to country house. Soon the cluster of village thatch and whitewash on the plateau, already some hundred feet above the level of the sea, brings the first stage of our mimic mountain travel to a close.

Traverse the little straggling street with its trim garden-patches decked here and there by a solitary wind-worn walnut-tree or holly-bush, sheltering a bench or rustic arbour. Be not too curious as to the architecture of the few modern improvements, but pass on to the next ascent, and by the time it is fairly begun the whole character of the country will have changed. The road narrows, and shows how heavy rains turn into miniature torrent-beds the cart-ruts on the chalky soil. Trees have given place to gorse-bushes, and the first spurs of the open Downs rise green and smooth before us. More cornfields at first skirt the way on either side; steep banks bulge out at various points, whilst tempting footpaths straight across them offer shorter cuts. By degrees the ever-increasing steepness is overcome, the barley is replaced by the clover and the just peeping-up turnip and mangold; the cart-road has become a track, and the track a sheep-path, which, finally lost amidst clumps of bramble and gorse, lands you upon the untilled verdure itself, fresh, springy, and yielding—a mingled essence of sweet odours of wild-thyme, clover, and sheep-browsed grass. Once here, you will admit, whilst pausing to take breath, that you have a fair make-believe of mountain-side, in scent, in exercise, and in extent of view. Here is the best substitute for the heather that I know of. Southward, moreover, you have the additional element of ocean, to lend another and surely not altogether an undesirable feature to the scene; and if we bend our steps towards the seaward limit of our mountain-range, there come into sight the bold headlands and curving shingly shore, with the surf-fringe lapping gently or breaking greedily upon the rocky bulwarks, as if to verify Hugh Miller's imagery, when he described the sea as 'a great blue dragon, whose mission it was to devour the land.' From the tall summit of Beachy Head, with its sheer-down face of chalk, it is hardly possible to imagine a finer aspect of the 'wide, wide world;' we have it there in grandeur sufficient, surely, to satisfy a Londoner fresh from Fleet-street or

the Strand. It may not be as boundless, really, as an outlook from the Irish western coast, nor will there be in calm weather the same peculiar heaving motion visible; but, since the eye finds no opposite coast to break the straight horizon, the notion of an Atlantic seaboard may as readily be conjured up as the mountainous idea; for never be it forgotten we are making the best and the most of what is within two hours of prosaic London.

Fling yourself down, then, at a spot like this, upon the soft turf by the cliff-edge; rest and drink in all that your quickened senses will absorb—the sights, the smells, the sounds; regard the emerald, purple, and azure-streaked waters, flecked with white-crested wavelets, and dotted in the distance by the sea-going sails of the Channel traffic; sniff up the briny ozone-laden air, mingling with that aforesaid odour of wild-thyme, turf, and clover; listen to its soughing up the cliff-face and across the grass; to the chopping caws of the choughs and crows that 'wing the midway air,' and to the lapping ripple of 'the murmuring surge that on the unnumbered idle pebbles chafes.' And—if you be not imaginative, you are not for my company—think that, at least in all these respects, the place must be much the same as when the Saxon outposts first sighted the approaching warrior-crowded ships of the Norman Conqueror, or, for the matter of that, as when the ancient Britons first beheld the on-coming triremes and galleys of the colonising Cæsar!

'Grand steadfast forms,' such as these Downs on which we rest, remain unchanged, however 'changeful the days that play over them.'

Having drunk our fill of the glories yielded by the coast-line, turn we now again inland; and if it be too long a tramp at once to reach the great northern spurs and boundary of the region, we will again flit on the wings of imagination thitherward; and dipping like the indigenous sparrow-hawk into some of the lonely cups and hollows, or swooping across the billowing ridges, or poising stationary for a while, high in mid-air, like a darkened star, take in at a glance a few more of the features peculiar to, and unique in, Downland.

The solitary farmsteads are prominent amongst these. Lichen and weather-toned old piles of red brick, tile, and slate, they nestle away snugly, unsuspected, in many a remote valley. Sparsely surrounded, perhaps, by a few tall elms and untended evergreen hedgerows, the ordinary stranger has no suspicion of their existence until he plumps upon them suddenly from some point of vantage. He will never have guessed that yonder narrow, winding, little-used road is the highway to a small colony, almost as complete and self-sustaining as if it were in the Australian bush; yet so it is; and its denizens must traverse many a hilly mile ere the semblance of a town or village or even another habitation can be reached. Sometimes three or four farms are clustered near together in such a spot, and a little gray, ancient, square-towered church peeps up hard by, as unexpectedly as all the rest. This group of habitations will boast of a name ending assuredly in 'dene,' 'don,' or 'hurst,' and, seeing that there is an old-fashioned parsonage, a few scattered labourers' cottages, a tiny shop, and a post-office, is called a village. There too will be seen big barns, with bulging portals, thatched ample ricks,

lifted a foot or two from the ground, on queer pyramidal dwarf stone columns, making them look like giants' footstools, everything speaking of plenty and high-class agriculture. Stabling too there will be for the huge plough and wagon-horses or, may be, mild-eyed oxen, since this last-named beast of burden is yet to be found tugging and toiling, surely if slowly, in the more secluded parts of the Sussex Downs. Of course there are straw-yards, piggeries, and poultry-houses, and all the surroundings of farm-life; not forgetting the pond and the queer old draw-well or two, with battered primitive wooden shelters, buckets, and windlasses. An escape from this secluded retreat will, at the easiest, demand a climb requiring sound wind and limb; and if we take a straight cut up the overhanging steep of grass, bordered by a ragged stunted fringe of pine and beech copse, we shall be in no danger of forgetting our mountain simile.

So, as Charles Kingsley has written, we go on: 'Up into the hills, past white crumbling chalk-pits, fringed with feathered juniper and tottering ashes; up between steep ridges of turf, crested with black fir-wood and silver birch; up into the labyrinthine bosom of the hills.'

Upon the heights once more, we shall espy, sooner or later, another prominent characteristic of the South Downs, and one again in perfect accord with the leading idea of which I write; for what figure so appropriate for a mountain landscape as the shepherd leaning motionless on his crook, or lying beneath a sheltering cluster of gorse in patient guardianship of his fleecy flock? Yes, of a certainty there he will be, in gray gabardine, slouched hat, and brown-leather leggings, with his wallet by his side, watching, in company with his faithful and sagacious dog, the long straggling line of 'silly sheep,' those far-famed 'muttons' which bear the name of the country where they are bred and fed. He, like the hills amidst which, from the cradle to the grave, his life is spent, knows no change; very much what he was a thousand years ago, with some few allowances for the advance of civilisation, or rather, an altered civilisation, he remains to this day. His calling is one unsubjected to mutation—the tending and breeding of sheep in open hilly countries cannot be done by machinery, or reduced to an exacter science than it was by our forefathers. Improved arrangements in some details, perhaps, may have crept in; but they do not and cannot materially affect the life and aspect of the man whose business it is to stand sentry over the gentle browsing droves upon a wild hill pasturage.

The English shepherd generally—certainly he of the South Downs—is almost unique, resembling in nowise, save in name, the herdsman of other countries. These are all, more or less, brought into contact at times with the outer world. The Scotch shepherd's or drover's life is full of travel and incident; the Swiss herdsman has, as it were, to be perpetually on the defence against the stupendous forces of Nature—the hurricane, the avalanche, the snow-drift, the torrent. He who tends sheep in the wilds of the Antipodes, or on the prairies of the American continent, is usually their owner; they are his wealth and substance, and he must be prepared to do, and often does, battle for his own life and theirs, as he drives his enormous flocks over leagues of pathless waste, mounted and armed to the teeth.

The Oriental shepherd is still, even as we know him in biblical records, frequently a warrior, potentate, chieftain, and leader of his tribe. But yonder weather-beaten elderly man, whom we see in our rambles over the Downs, is a being entirely apart from all these: he has probably never, even in these days of railroads, gone twenty miles from that village in the hollow where he was born. 'Wars, and rumours of wars,' affect not him more than they did his ancestors; they touch not his occupation, for, if that be not peaceful, it is nothing, it is gone. For the greater part of his time, he may sit, as Shakespeare says, and

> 'Carve out dials quaintly, point by point;
> Thereby to see the minutes how they run;'

and he may say,

> 'When this is known, then to divide the times:
> So many hours must I tend my flock;
> So many hours must I take my rest;
> So many hours must I contemplate;
> So many hours must I sport myself!'

Little enough forsooth, however, can be his sport. Beyond the trapping of a few dozen wheatears with springes set in the turf, between the middle of July and end of August, the search for plover's eggs in the spring, the marking of the hare in her form, or the mole and rabbit in their burrows, his *délassements* do not go; yet he is content to spend his days in that narrow world, which, arched by the gray English sky, is bounded southward by the straight horizon of the sea, and east, west, and north by rolling Downs.

And the farther we get to the north the more rolling and precipitous they become, until at length, pausing on their frontier, at such grand elevations as the 'Devil's Dyke,' 'Chanctonbury Ring,' 'Newmarket Hill,' or 'Telscombe Tye,' and looking down and out upon the broad weald of Sussex, we must admit, however prosaic our mood, that these are like mountain crests.

The cockneyfication of the region by excursionists to the little inn at the Devil's Dyke cannot destroy the grandeur and extent of the view from this point; it cannot lessen the precipitance of that sheer-down green wall surrounding the hollow which gives the title to the place; it cannot detract from the romantic picturesque peep down upon the roofs of the houses and square-towered church of the village of Poynings beneath, upon the farmsteads, the copses, woods, broad pasturages, and the white winding roads descending over the shoulders of the chalk until they are gradually lost amidst the warmer-toned and more level landscape.

Hereabouts, and at intervals all along the boundary of this geological transformation, narrow valleys open out upon the plain from the bosom of the hills, with sufficient character in their formation amply to entitle them (in my mimic dealing with the subject) to the name of 'passes.' And in the old coaching days the crossing them by night, in winter and rough weather, was attended, if not by danger, at least by the necessity for great care that harness, skid, and lamps were all in good working order. Thus I have my 'St. Gothard' and my 'Simplon,' my 'Splugen' and 'Cenis,' the similitude to which I do not allow to be detracted from by the piercing of a railway tunnel here and there through the chalk, whilst the great circular ponds in various high places, a solitary windmill or two, and a lonely hut, do duty, within a run

of an hour and a half from London, for St. Bernard's gloomy lake and hospice.

Nor are my mountains devoid of legend and romance. Many dark deeds committed amidst their solitudes invest certain localities with a weird interest, and help to inspire one with something like that sense of awe and superstition from which no true mountaineer can ever quite escape. The ghost of poor Mr. Griffith, the Brighton brewer, who, on a night in February 1849, was robbed and murdered at a spot by the foot of one of the spurs of the big hills, ominously known as the 'Deadways Field,' starts up whenever the neighbourhood of Dale Gate and New Timber is revisited. These places, lying at the entrance to that one of my South Down passes running from Horsham and Henfield into the London road to Brighton, always conjure up in my mind the vision of the unfortunate gentleman returning home in his gig along the lonely road laden with the customers' moneys that he had collected. I hear him wishing a cheery 'good-night' to the man at the turnpike, and then a mile farther on I behold his lifeless body by the roadside, shot through the heart, his garments torn and besmirched, his pockets rifled, and, scattered by the way, his broken whip and unloaded pistol, a crape mask, part of the severed reins, and a clasp-knife; with his horse and gig turned round; and I remember how, before this fatal journey, an anonymous letter of warning had been sent to the poor brewer's clerk, the usual travelling collector, and how Mr. Griffith made the round himself rather than place the life of his servant in peril; how 300*l.* reward was offered for the discovery of the murderers; and how, from that day to this, no light has ever been let in upon the mystery.

Some cross-roads near a place known as the 'Spittal Barn' hard by Lewes, bear an unenviable renown as having been the scene of the interment of a poisoner named Brinkhurst, who, having made away with his bosom-friend Moor by means of arsenic, at the aforesaid county town, finally poisoned himself in court when on his trial. He had confessed his crime, and was being shown some powder that he might identify it as resembling that which he had used upon his victim, when he seized the packet, and, before he could be stopped, swallowed the contents then and there, dying in frightful agony soon after. Though this occurred in the seventeenth century, the memory of it is revived whenever a descent from the high Downs by which it is surrounded is made upon the queer old-fashioned town.

Thus the range of the South Downs comes in for its share of tragic associations, whilst westward, towards Chichester, Midhurst, and Portsmouth, the elder amongst the natives will call your attention to many a lonely knoll or junction of cross-roads, where the detected amongst the highwaymen and smugglers who, in former days, infested this seaboard and the king's highway generally, expiated their crimes upon the gibbet, and hung rotting in chains for years—ghastly finger-posts pointing out, albeit with doubtful results, the way not to travel.

It is not so many years since such spectacles could be seen as to exclude them from our memory whilst enjoying the solitudes of the Downs, nor is it possible to deprive such names as the 'Whiteways,' the 'Long Furlong,' or the already-mentioned 'Deadways

Field' of a certain weird significance.

It is, however, the Downs in their simple beauty, the breezy freshness of their bracing air, and the splendid outlook from their crests that I am chiefly concerned with, and to which I point as their great attraction.

'Those mighty Downs,' once more to quote Charles Kingsley, 'with their enormous sheets of spotless turf, where the dizzy eyes lose all standard of size and distance before the awful simplicity, the delicate vastness of those grand curves and swells.'

The Alps have been called 'the playground of Europe;' let me call the South Downs 'the playground of London;' for nowhere within easy reach can the athletic Londoner find a fairer field for a stretch of wind and limb.

Almost at any season when a 'country outing' is possible, they are available for a brief holiday; and it is hard to say whether they show to greater advantage when clad with the winter's snow or the summer's verdure.

The cloud and sunshine chasing each other across the bright smooth turf under the July sky scarcely reveal the beauties of billowing ridge and hollowing cup more effectively than will the vast white sheet which sometimes lies unfolded beneath the leaden gray of December weather.

W. W. F.

TWIN FLOWERS.

WHICH of the twain shall be held as the fairest?
Easy the question and hard the reply;
Each for her dowry has gifts of the rarest—
Surely the judgment of Paris 'twould try:
Ida, whose gaze in imperial fashion
Sees but her slaves of the future in man;
Violet, who knows not the pride and the passion—
Often life's treasure and often its ban.

Fair is the landscape and cloudless the heaven,
Softly the summer wind ruffles the flowers;
If on earth fulness of peace can be given,
'Tis for a space in such exquisite hours.
Nature accords in her calm with the faces,
Yet all untouch'd by the shadow of pain;
Long may it be ere the shadow replaces
Light that dimm'd never shines fully again!

Yet, *ay de mi!* if the future, unfolding
All the dim years that are hid from our gaze,
Gave to the eyes—now untroubled, beholding
Nature's fair face in these radiant days—
All the full scene of life's drama hereafter,
All the wild medley of hopes and of fears,
Would not the fresh lips be hush'd in their laughter,
Would not the eyes dim with awe-stricken tears?

Who can decide if the dawn in its glory
Flushing youth's world will survive till midday?
Who knows if bitter or sweet be the story—
Cover'd with thorns or with roses the way?
But, ye fair children, whatever the morrow
Brings, this is certain, though years may have flown—
No hours, though unclouded by doubt or by sorrow,
Will be such as to-day in their peace are your own.

W. R.

HOUSEHOLD HORTICULTURE.

As we cannot all of us have a Kew Gardens of our own, we must needs content ourselves with something less comprehensive. But even Kew's capabilities are limited. It cannot cultivate every herb which, as the poet saith, 'sips the dew,' even if, perchance, it could get them all. For yet stronger reasons, our own private collection must be still choicer and more select. The vegetable kingdom is vast, while our means and appliances may be exceedingly restricted. How, then, under such circumstances, is the passion for gardening, which is innate in so many human breasts, to be gratified?

The problem admits of easier solution than at first sight may be obvious. As it is impossible that you should make a familiar friend of every plant which exists on *terra firma* as well as on earth which is not firm, not to mention aquatics which grow in water, you have only to decide which you prefer. A man cannot keep up even a bowing acquaintance with every one of the four millions who dwell in London, but confines his friendship to a favoured few; and so must it be with your horticultural pursuits, whether merely household or on a larger scale. You must decide what line of cultivation you will go into, which does not exclude the heterogeneous and the miscellaneous—the odds-and-ends line of horticulture.

Household horticulture is undertaken either for show and display, by which is meant a most laudable means of domestic decoration, or else with personal and private study or recreation for its principal object. In both cases the choice of subjects will depend whether the preference is given to foliage or flowers, to form or to colour, to the phenomena of growth and development, or of inflorescence. The foliage class may be made to include many plants possessing, in addition to their ornamental merits, great botanical and economic interest. Although not a few plants uniting commercial value with good appearance and even beauty—the nutmeg, coffee, cinnamon, black pepper—must have a hothouse to do well in the United Kingdom, others will thrive in the temperate atmosphere of our houses. Want of space forbids our giving more than a hint which, as a word to the wise, may direct attention to what will be found a delightful branch of horticulture. Some people too may like to grow plants which not everybody else possesses. The black tea, Thea bohea, is a handsome shrub with evergreen leaves, producing small white flowers in September. Green tea, T. viridis, resembles it, but is of taller stature, and has narrower leaves.

It should be mentioned that the Chinese tea-plant is vulgarly confounded with Lycium europæum and L. barbarum; the latter the Duke of Argyle's tea-tree, a coarse, hardy, unprepossessing, trailing shrub, which has the merit of making hedges and arbours in the sandiest and most sterile soils. There are also persons who boast of growing

their own coffee, in the open ground, in Flanders; but they only do so through a like misnomer. Their vaunted coffee-plant is a lupine, whose seeds, roasted and ground, furnish the pretended mocha. Whether the beverage so obtained is better or worse than that from Hunt's once-famous roasted wheat, I cannot say; for I have not tried it, and don't intend to. I do, however, propose trying to cultivate in my study, as you would a myrtle—another most desirable pot-shrub—the camphor laurel, Laurus camphora, all parts of which exhale their special odour, and which is included by nurserymen in their temperate-house catalogues.

The castor-oil plant, Ricinus, common enough in gardens as an annual, and suffered to perish in autumn, becomes a tree in warm localities where it never freezes. Grown in a large pot or tub and kindly treated, the ricinus becomes a handsome object when two or three years old, deserving a place in summer on a lawn (with its pot plunged and hidden in the ground), as a semi-tropical specimen. The Australian blue gum, Eucalyptus globulus, of whose fever-absorbing powers so much has been said, and respecting whose possible hardiness in Great Britain unfounded hopes have been held out, makes a handsome and striking pot-plant, notwithstanding that it rapidly grows out of all bounds, and will not conform itself to pruning or pinching operations. Its sea-green leaves, covered with a whitish bloom, give out when crushed a balsamic odour, which is a combination of camphor, with the resinous scent of a pine-grove. A *liqueur* resembling Chartreuse has recently been distilled from them in France. Seedling-plants are cheaply obtainable. For the first two or three years, with regular waterings, they make charming pot-plants. When they reach the ceiling and find they cannot get through it, they may be transferred for experiment to believers in acclimatisation, and their place supplied by fresh-raised youngsters.

Foliage-plants include the whole long list of ferns. A few palms in their young state may also be grown in sunny apartments, without causing any great disappointment; but although unquestionably things of beauty, they cannot continue to be joys for ever, because, if alive and well, they would eventually outgrow, however slowly, the space which can be accorded to them. The most recommendable household palms are Latania borbonica, with shining green leaves, from which the dust is easily wiped; Raphis flabelliformis makes a formidable rival to it, on account of the greater lightness of its foliage; Chamærops sinensis and humilis are more sombre in their hues. Corypha australis, with Phœnix reclinata and sylvestris, furnish a sufficient variety of this set of vegetable forms.

But the catalogues of the leading nurserymen, British and foreign, contain more information than it is possible even to glance at here. Nevertheless, I make bold to say that, valuable as they are in other respects, they are not always and absolutely sure and certain guides as to temperature and atmospheric humidity, and, in consequence, as to probable adaptability to household culture. Nothing but an actual trial of plants can determine exactly what they will stand in living rooms. One would expect that all plants assigned to 'cool-house, greenhouse, *serre froide, serre tempérée*,' might live and

flourish in ordinary apartments under suitable conditions of light, &c. But no; many charming things, so classed, pine in rooms after a more potent stimulus to their vitality. And, poor things, they are so tenacious of life, and die so hard, that it makes one pity their unavailing efforts to live. One would rather see them carried off by a sudden fit or galloping consumption. I have had Blechnum brasiliense (a tree fern), and not a few other foreign ferns, lingering for a couple of years in a continuously ineffectual struggle for existence, before I could resolve to consign them to the cemetery of plants, *i. e.* the manure heap, there to be converted into sustenance for a fresh generation of favourites. 'Twas disappointment long drawn out. And yet an excellent catalogue, by a first-rate horticulturist, makes Blechnum brasiliense a *serre froide* tenant.' I can only say that all *serre froide* tenants are not, with me, suitable for living rooms; which does not prevent others from trying their luck, or their skill, with the like.

When once you know your own mind, and have agreed with yourself what you like best, now is a good time to buy plants in pots, both for immediate summer service and to come in for winter use. I make no mention of annuals or of things that are good only for the season, and that a short one. Any one can purchase a pot of mignonette, omphalodes linifolia, maritime stock, and such like, and throw it away when faded and done with. That is not horticulture, either household or open air; although buying the seeds of annuals, and flowering them yourself indoors, is a proof of considerable cultural ability. The lady who can show a pot of well-grown ten-weeks' stock, or that dear little everlasting Rhodanthe manglesii, is no mean house-gardener.

A great point is to select, for spring and summer show, plants that will give as little trouble as may be to get through the winter. Splendid while they last are many of the cactuses, especially C. speciosus and C. speciocissimus and the numerous hybrids obtained from them. Certainly they are ugly enough when off show. Cactus or Cereus flagelliformis, the old whip cactus, is characteristic when perched aloft on a sunny bracket, and allowed to droop naturally; which is better than training it into fans or on vase-shaped wires, however readily it may lend itself to the plan. The night-blooming cereus, C. grandiflorus (of which six or eight varieties exist), requires more heat and space than living rooms can conveniently afford. A generation or two ago it used to be an excuse for jovial suppers in amateur succulent houses, to witness the expansion of its large handsome flowers. The guests who sung and practised 'We won't go home till morning' might also witness their fading too. C. Peruvianus has a variety, monstrosus, which grows into the shape of a dark-green bit of Japanese rock-work, and the older it is—thirty, forty, fifty years—the more strange and eccentric its aspect becomes. For a long time nobody knew what it was, until, flowering in 1814 in the Montpellier Botanic Garden, it betrayed to M. de Candolle the secret of its identity with the taper of Peru. It is a curiosity of the easiest culture, which you may stick out of the way when you are tired of its sight and bring back again when you wish for another look at it, observing, however, that it must neither freeze nor rot with too much watering. It is the very

thing to set in the sunny front of an old-style druggist's shop, for it is sure to impress the multitude with the belief that it is the source of some potent and priceless specific elixir. All the cactus family submit more or less to this free and easy mode of treatment, a smaller species, C. or Mamillaria otonis, shaped like a plump deep-ribbed pincushion, gives as little trouble as the preceding, and annually produces its crop of brilliant-yellow crimson-centred flowers. Most of these, even when out of flower, are useful to stop a gap in a window when other occupants are on leave of absence.

A most handy, pleasing, showy, and easily-managed family of plants for summer display are the tuberous-rooted begonias, both typical species and hybrids from them. Their foliage is bright and fresh; their flowers, produced in long succession, continue to appear from the first day of blooming until the date of their winter rest (which the majority of this section strictly observe), while a few go on flowering through the very deadest season of the year. Their colours are white, yellow, red, and vivid scarlet, comprising intermediate hues of buff, orange, and pink; sometimes with delicate shadings and contrasts in the petals of the same flower. But their great recommendation to household horticulturists is, that the varieties which hibernate do so frankly and completely. Even young cuttings raised during the season follow in this the example of their parents. These latter may be purchased now, in bloom, showing their qualifications and what they can do. About November they will flag, and their stems will spontaneously part from the root, as if they were dying. It is no such thing; they are only going to sleep. Then is a good time to repot them (in light rich soil, half leaf-mould or spent cucumber-bed and half fresh loam) in larger pots, if required. The plants increase in beauty with age and with the increasing size and strength of the tubercules. You thus get specimen plants with just pretensions to exhibition. The quality and freshness of the soil are mentioned on account of their importance; although in large cities it is often easier to procure new plants than good earth to repot old ones in. If no other source is available, it must be obtained as a favour from some benevolent nurseryman.

When repotted, let them take their repose in any snug corner or shelf where it does not freeze. Light or darkness is all one to them then. Keep them dry rather than moist, but not absolutely dry as dust. Too damp, they may rot; while excessive dryness will retard their starting in spring. The judicious amateur will hit upon the happy mean; which reminds me of the regretted Van Houtte's recommending for Genethyllis tulipifera (a greenhouse shrub, with box-like foliage, bearing large cream-coloured flowers striped with red) plenty of air and 'intelligent waterings.' There, indeed, he hit the mark, and gave to the world a golden rule. By 'intelligent' measures great things may be done in the plant way as in other matters.

In March or April take your potted tubercules out of their retirement; give them plenty of sunshine and moderate moisture. If they make numerous shoots, you may remove the superabundant ones when three or four inches long, detaching them at their junction with the tuber, and plant them in small pots separately. They will strike root, forming tubers of their own, like dahlia

shoots (as will cuttings taken from the main stems during summer), flower the same season, die down in autumn, and so take their rest. There is no need to repot them till the following spring after they have started, leaving their old ball of earth unbroken while shifting them into a larger pot.

The tuberous begonias now are legion, and before long will be scores of legions. The good old B. discolor deserves a place for the sake of 'auld lang syne;' besides, it is hardy in the open border in ordinary winters; and besides that, its large red-veined leaves are very effective seen from within-doors, especially under sunshine, a point not to be lost sight of by window gardeners. It is this property of semi-transparent colouration which gives great value to sundry plants with inconspicuous flowers, such as Achyranthes verschaffeltii, the dark-leaved varieties of ricinus, and others. It is from a red vegetation like these that the planet Mars, astronomers tell us, derives his fiery hue. [Don't patronise coleuses, in spite of their beauty, unless you have a hothouse in which to winter them.]

Free bloomers, not new, but inexpensive, are Begonias weltoniensis and chelsoni, hybrids, and B. boliviensis, a striking species, the parent of many varieties, present and to come. Great things were expected of B. octopetala; but I have not yet been able to get it to flower, perhaps for want of sufficient heat to start it earlier in the spring. From the *Gardeners' Chronicle*, which scrupulously records every horticultural novelty, we learn that to M. Lemoine of Nancy has been awarded a first-class certificate for his new double-flowered, tuberous-rooted begonia Gloire de Nancy, of a brilliant vermilion red. We shall see whether doubleness in begonia blooms, which is fast coming on, be an improvement or not. Every flower is not the better for that change. To my mind the single snowdrop is more graceful than the double; the same with many fuchsias; while double petunias are often mere wisps of coloured rags and scraps. The same journal describes, Oct. 14, 1876, a considerable number of new tuberous-rooted hybrid begonias, of which I may cite, as a specimen, Balsaminæflora, a double-flowered variety, with light-green foliage, and a compact and low habit of growth. The blooms, of a pleasing shade of light red, are produced in the proportion of one double-flowered male between a couple of female blooms, which latter are invariably single. All these, if yet on sale, would be somewhat expensive at present.

Carpet-bedding being all the fashion, I don't see why chamber-gardeners should be deprived of that mode of charming the eye. Consequently I am trying my hand at a portable carpet-bed, a sort of toy garden, made principally with cuttings, which really promises to exhibit the prettiness of a nice dish of salmagundi. I take a round earthen pan, like those used for raising seedlings, but with upright sides, four inches deep. The only pattern this admits is concentric circles; in a larger circular vessel a star might be worked. Square or oblong carpet-bed pans would give the potter more trouble to make. My outer circle is composed of the small spiderweb houseleek; the second, of golden variegated lemon thyme; the next, of white variegated thyme, producing a ring of gray; then come sprigs of

achyranthes, with a plume of golden-feather pyrethrum in the middle. There! You may set it on your dinner-table. I have seen ornamented cakes and tarts considerably larger than this experimental piece of plant confectionary. One advantage which it possesses over beds in a parterre is, that if you don't like it you can throw it away. It ought to have contained a circle of white, but the centaureas are too big. With a little wider diameter to my bed, I could have employed that hoary oddity, Gnaphalium lanatum.

Gardeners obtain great results by the application of bottom heat in their frames and houses. During the fine season, plants in the open ground profit by the same healthy stimulus. On a summer's afternoon thrust your hand into the earth of a sunny border, and you will feel what sort of temperature it is which enables roots to perform their functions. Window plants are rarely allowed to enjoy the comfort of having their feet kept warm. Even in a south window, the pots, being considered unsightly, are usually placed out of view, below the line of the sash's woodwork, so that the sun's rays never fall upon them; or they are incased in pretty envelopes of card-paper, wood, or porcelain; or they are so crowded as to shade each other from the vivifying influence of sunshine, except for a brief moment. The plants suffer accordingly from a never-ceasing chill at the roots, especially if too freely watered. The obvious remedy is to raise the pots sufficiently to let the roots (the plant's purveyors) bask in the sun, as well as the foliage and the flowers. If the window-sill or shelf does not lend itself easily to this purpose, a simple mode of raising the pots that need exposure to warmth is to set each pot on another empty pot of the same size inverted. This plan involves no fixtures, and allows changes of plants to be made as often as is wished. Carrying out the same principle, water always with tepid water, never with water colder than the air of the room in which the plants are growing.

Earthworms are a great nuisance in a flower-pot in which a plant is well established; and it is easier to let them get in than to get them out. Often they are introduced with the soil when the plant is potted; search should therefore be made for them (as well as for even more destructive larvæ) during that process. But they are inquisitive as well as curious creatures, and if a pot is left standing on the open border, they will wriggle themselves in at the hole made for drainage, to try whether its contents are to their taste or not. To prevent this intrusion pot-plants set out-doors should be placed on a board, or on bricks, or on a layer of dry cinders.

Not only do worms disfigure the surface of a flower-pot, but they rob the plants. Like every other living creature, they must feed on something; and their diet is earth, which they afterwards reject impoverished of some of its nutritive elements. The better the worms are fed, the worse will the flowers fare. They may often be dislodged by a sudden fright. Perhaps in changing the place of a pot you may give it a slight blow quite unintentionally, and a bright-red tenant, of whose presence you were unaware, will emerge in all haste to escape from fancied danger. Present him immediately, as a treat, to your gold fish. By tapping the pot or disturbing the earth with a stick the worm will sometimes show his nose above ground. Seize him,

and pull him out firmly but gradually; for if he breaks, the remaining half will form a new head, and become a perfect worm. If he succeeds in drawing himself back unhurt, you will not easily play him the same trick again. He is as cunning as you are, and knows what you are at. Suddenly dosing a pot with quite warm water, but not hot enough to injure the roots, will sometimes make a worm shift his quarters for fear of being scalded the next time of watering.

The aphis or fly, 'our little green brother who lives on the rose,' if a single one is permitted to live, soon multiplies into an annoyance. Smoking the plants infested, as they stand in your window, is useless except in affording a lady a pretext for permitting, perhaps asking, a gentleman to puff his cigar in her presence. Green fly can be effectually smoked off only in a well-closed greenhouse, or, for want of that, in a large chest in which the plants may be shut up with a little smouldering tobacco. Branches badly attacked may be smeared, and thereby cleared, with a brush soaked in a strong infusion of tobacco; but it discolours for a while the shoots to which it is applied, and, moreover, stains fair fingers. Slighter visitations of the insects may be kept down by continually brushing them off with a small clean painter's brush kept for the purpose. Take care, however, that each aphis dislodged has no further chance of rising in the world, and that 'when he falls, he falls like Lucifer, never to hope again.' For, feeble as he looks, he has sufficient claws and energy to justify the naturalist who referred him to the Hookey-Walker genus.

Brown or turtle scale is a still more displeasing insect pest, to which orange-trees, camellias, and even evergreen ferns are liable, often caught in and brought from infested greenhouses. Therefore, when buying such plants, look sharp to see that they are clean. If you discover that your orange- or lemon-tree is thus disfigured, paint all its leaves and stems with a mixture of soft soap and tobacco-juice; wash it off next day with a sponge and tepid water, and watch closely, for some time afterwards, that none of the culprits have escaped to leave behind them lineal descendants. What a heap of trouble! Certainly; but in household horticulture the trouble constitutes part of the pleasure. Gardening operations may have a beginning, but they have no end. A good and hearty gardener can never say, 'I have done now; everything is finished off for the present; there is nothing more to bother me for to-day, tomorrow, or the day after; I can run away for a week or go to sleep for a fortnight.' Cultivated plants, especially pot-plants, are insatiable in their demands upon your attention. Like babies hard to get to sleep, they dislike being left alone.

Not a few houses (more perhaps in provincial towns than in London) have a back yard, at the bottom of which is some sort of out-building—scullery or wash-house—to which the family often go to and fro. By promoting this appendage to the rank of a back or second kitchen and connecting it with the house by a lean-to covered passage with glazed roof and front, in the first place the real kitchen is relieved by an annex which the mistress can visit and inspect without catching cold; and secondly, the glass corridor will render good service as a greenhouse. The warmth from the house and the back kitchen will keep out ordinary frosts. In

summer you may make it as gay as you please with the whole list of conservatory flowers to choose from, and it need not be anything like bare in winter. I have seen excellent grapes grown in such a passage, whose utility is obvious while its beauty is acknowledged at very first sight. The longer and broader it can be made, the more effective it becomes.

E. S. D.

P.S. The camphor laurel, obtained from Van Houtte's, of Ghent, is growing admirably, and may be safely recommended to lovers of indoor evergreens. Hyacinthus candicans, a noble species from the Cape, in a *large* pot, is throwing up its flower-stem, which ought to attain a yard in height and carry a dozen or so of snow-white bells. As it blooms in August or September, the amateur can now decide whether it tempts him or not. There are hopes of its proving hardy in the British Isles; to ascertain which, you must buy it and try it.

TWELVE O'CLOCK, NOON.

It is almost useless to tell you the story, because I know you will not believe it. I have not alluded to the circumstances for the last twenty years, and I quite intended never to speak of them again; but our conversation has taken such an extraordinary turn that I will tell you the story exactly as the event happened to me; and my only stipulation is that when you have heard it, you will make no comment. I don't ask you to believe it, because I know that ninety-nine people out of a hundred never would; but whatever you may think, I will tell you truly and conscientiously what occurred.

It is more easy to say that a period of twenty years has elapsed in a novel than it is to recall the same period to the memory in real life. However, twenty years ago I was a very young man. Like most young men, I was hard up. I had just passed my final examination, and had been duly dubbed a lawyer and made a gentleman by Act of Parliament. One day, as I was anxiously reading the pages of the *Law Times*, looking out for something to do, I came across an advertisement, setting forth in glowing language the fact that, in a country market-town, within about thirty miles from London, there was a small lawyer's practice (capable of great extension by an energetic young man, the advertisement averred) which was to be sold for a mere trifle. In those days I had greater confidence in my own abilities than I have at present, and the perusal of this 'legal fiction' (for I can call it nothing else) fired my young imagination. I saw myself installed in a cheerful and business-like office, overlooking a quaint old-fashioned street, and shaded by tall trees growing at the back of the house. I imagined myself as the registrar of the County Court, and the receptacle of the family secrets of all the farmers for miles round. I said to myself that I was not ambitious, that I cared little for the worry and anxiety of the busy town. A quiet useful country life, the esteemed friend of the rector, and the husband of a loving wife—these were my desires, and they all seemed to me to be included within the six-line paragraph in the newspaper.

To hesitate was to lose the chance of a lifetime. 'There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune,' I remarked. Therefore I at once wrote to the address indicated in the advertisement. After a considerable amount of correspondence, I became the purchaser of the practice; and after paying for it, found myself with five pounds' hard cash, and thousands of pounds in imagination. I decided that it would be unwise to allow the grass to grow under my feet; and so, without losing any time, I packed up all my earthly treasures (which I found would easily go within the compass of my portmanteau), and started from the London terminus for my destination.

In about half an hour I arrived at a pretty-looking country station, where I alighted, and, taking ad-

vantage of a ruin of a 'bus which was drawn by a wheezy and low-spirited horse, I soon found myself in the middle of the town of H——. I immediately went to the lodgings I had previously secured; and after being delighted with their cleanliness and neatness, I sallied forth to inspect my office. In a few minutes I arrived at the place, and was ushered into my premises by a very young and light-haired clerk, who kindly gave up his pastime of sliding down the banisters, in order to show me over the offices. Here, too, everything looked clean and business-like, and the number of bundles and papers ostentatiously displayed all over the office filled me with bright pictures of the future. Having completed my survey, I went to see the town. Here, at least, my visions were fulfilled. The long straggling street planted with trees, and terminating in a large square filled with farmers' and agricultural implements, was almost exactly what I had imagined in my daydreams. Turning down a quiet and narrow side-street, I found myself in front of a splendid church, round which clustered old-fashioned cottages and houses. The town was everywhere interspersed with trees, and the whole place, lighted up as it was by the warm glow of the setting sun, looked simply charming.

The next day was Sunday, so I went to church. The interior was no doubt quite equal to the exterior, which had impressed me so much on the previous evening; but I did not notice it. The singing of the surpliced choir was, I daresay, excellent; but I did not join in it (although my voice was an excellent tenor at that time). The sermon was, I have little doubt, an excessively telling and practical one, but I did not listen to it; for, to tell you the truth, a great change had come over me since I arrived at H——. I had fallen in love. *She* was sitting opposite to me, dressed entirely in black. I cannot describe her to you, and I would not if I could, because whatever impression my words might convey to you, it would fall so short of the picture in my mind that I should hate myself for having slandered her to you. I don't mean to say, as they do in novels, that she was gloriously beautiful, or anything of that sort; but what I mean is that her sweet pale face and the graceful outline of her figure so impressed me, and called up all the good feelings in my nature, that, without waiting to inquire what the deep crape she wore meant, or whether her affections were in any way previously occupied, without the slightest hesitation, I gave her all my love. Ah, it's a long time ago! (Have another glass of port, old man; the nights draw in now, and it's getting chilly.)

Sitting at my dinner and thinking over the events of the morning, I came to the conclusion that it was the duty of every man, and especially of a country lawyer, to support the Church, 'as by law established;' and accordingly, contrary to my usual custom, I again went to church in the evening. She was there. I forget the text. After service, as I had nothing particular to do, I—well, I don't know that it is worth while to beat about the bush for an expression—I followed her home. She knocked at a large and handsome house; and after she had been admitted by a man-servant, I casually walked past the door in an unconcerned manner, and noticed 'Dr. Stanton' engraved on the plate. Then I

turned in for the night; and the following day I settled down to work: but I grieve to say that the matter uppermost in my mind was how to obtain an introduction to Dr. Stanton. At length I accomplished this. I forget exactly how it was done; but it is easy enough, as you know, in a country town. The doctor was a very agreeable man, and had a large practice; and after a week or so of nodding and chatting about the weather, the crops, and the ministry, he asked me to dinner. I do not wish to make a love-story of this, because my object in telling it is to prove to you that 'there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy,' and not to expose to you my own foolishness.

Well, I went to dine with the doctor, and was duly introduced to his niece, Clara Stanton. She was still in black, and appeared low-spirited; but she received me very kindly, and during the course of the evening we had a pleasant chat together. She was well read, not at all bashful, and fortunately, as I happened to have just finished reading a book in which she was particularly interested, we began talking at once. Miss Stanton, I could see, was interested in the conversation, and brightened up considerably, so that on my leaving she expressed a wish that I would lend her the book we had been chatting about, which, as you may imagine, I was only too happy to do, especially as it made such a good excuse for calling again. The doctor was to all appearance very pleased, and hoped he would see me there often. I said I hoped he would.

As time went on, I discovered that Miss Stanton was an orphan, and had very little money of her own. The doctor was her guardian, and appeared excessively fond of her. I was a constant visitor at the house, and my love increased more and more each day. Clara always appeared pleased to see me, and by a thousand little ways showed an especial interest in me. I was young then, and took all these 'signs of the times' in a straightforward way, and thought that, even if she did not love me then, she was drifting that way. And so a year passed by. I was happy in my love, and I was young; and the love and the happiness were quite sufficient to counterbalance the anxiety that I suffered in another direction.

That business was a delusion and a snare. I was an energetic young man, but I did not extend the practice. Not that it was my fault; I should have extended the practice if there had been a practice to extend, but unfortunately there wasn't. The light-haired youth, who, I subsequently discovered, possessed the quality of lightness in his head and fingers as well as in his hair, gave me a most impressive and solemn warning at the end of a week, and left me alone in my glory a month after my arrival. The papers turned out on examination to be as deceptive as the youth. I grieve to expose the hollowness of mankind, but those papers were simply and emphatically dummies. Like conjuring tricks when you once knew them, 'there was nothing in them.' And consequently my visions (as most pleasant visions do) faded away, and at the end of twelve months I found myself minus money, plus love.

I determined to put an end to this unsatisfactory state of affairs one way or the other. Therefore one evening when I was alone with Clara I told her how I loved her. I know you can understand that it is painful even yet to recall

these circumstances, and so I shall tell you nothing but what is absolutely necessary to my story. Miss Stanton seemed almost bewildered when first it dawned upon her that I wished her to be my wife; then, when she fully understood my meaning, in a kind and yet firm manner she declined my proposals, adding that I had been a good friend to her ever since we were first acquainted, and she regretted that I had misconstrued actions, which she had intended merely as tokens of good-will, into hopes that she could ever regard me with any warmer feelings than those of a friend. She told me (and I can remember to this day how her beauty and grief affected me) that she had for some years been engaged to be married to a young officer in the navy, but that he had recently been drowned during a heavy storm which his ship had encountered. She explained to me that he was the person for whom she always wore mourning, and in broken accents told me how she could never love another. After this I could of course say nothing further to her; and upon apologising for my want of thought in not first ascertaining how it was she always appeared in black, I left her with feelings which, thank Heaven, one does not often experience.

Miss Stanton's refusal of my offer, coupled with the extremely discouraging nature of my business, induced me to make up my mind to leave H—— without any delay. The business was not worth anything, and so I had no trouble on my mind as regards disposing of it.

One morning, a few days after the event I have just related, I was settling up a few odd things in the office previous to my departure, when Dr. Stanton was announced. He entered, and seeing the nature of my preparations, he said,

'Why, you don't mean to say you are going to leave us?'

'Yes,' I answered, 'I am. The law is all very well, but if you don't have any of the profits to counterbalance its proverbial delay, you fare rather badly. I've given this place a fair trial for twelve months. I don't particularly care about the business. I have gained a good experience by the affair, and at twenty-four one need not be downhearted. I don't mind about the business.'

'Then what do you mind about?' inquired the doctor; 'for it is easy to see by your manner that there is something the matter with you.'

I could not deny it; and as I felt horribly downhearted and troubled, I made a clean breast and told the doctor all about it.

He started and, I thought, turned a little pale at my story; but quickly recovering himself, he answered in a kindly manner, 'I am very sorry; I wish you had consulted me first. But, however, least said on such a subject as this is soonest mended. I shall not persuade you to stay in the town after what has occurred; but for all that, you can undertake for me the business on which I have called. I have often regretted that I have hitherto been unable to help you in your business; but at length I can put something in your way, by which you can easily make a hundred or so.'

'It's like my luck,' I answered. 'If this had only come a month ago! However, I will do all I can to help you, doctor, and thank you over and over again for all your kindness to me.'

We shook hands sympathetically, and then the doctor told me his business. He said that a friend of his had lately died, leaving a large property, which had descend-

ed to him, he being the only male representative of the family surviving. But he explained to me that there were several distant relations, who were far from being well off; and as the property had come to him unexpectedly, he had decided to sell it all, and then divide the proceeds between the poorer relations, of course taking a fair share himself.

I complimented him on his generosity, but he cut me short by saying,

'The place is situated near to C——, which, as you know, is more than two hundred miles from here. What I want you to do is to go at once to C—— and make all arrangements about the sale of the property, and particularly to get a valuer to go over it with you. You shall have the deeds on your return to get the legal part of the affair ready.'

Then giving me the names of some first-class auctioneers in C——, Dr. Stanton departed.

Glad to do anything which might divert my thoughts from the painful subject upon which they were concentrated, I at once started for C——. It was late at night when I arrived there; and as nothing could be done then, I immediately went to bed. Next morning I called upon the auctioneers and explained my business. They could not go with me then to survey the property, but we made an arrangement for the ensuing day; and as I did not know a soul in the place and had nothing to do, I said, if they would direct me to the house, I would go and look over it. They gave me the keys, which were in their possession; and after a pleasant four miles' drive I reached my destination. There I drew up at a substantially-built lodge. The gate was opened by an old man, who informed me, in answer to my inquiry, that there was no one in the house. I drove up a long winding carriage-drive, and at length pulled up in front of a large square old-fashioned-looking mansion situated in what I may almost call a dell, inasmuch as the garden and park rose up on all sides round the house and were thickly wooded with shrubs. The whole looked deserted and forlorn, and the bright hot midsummer sun, which shone with great power and heat, seemed rather to add to the loneliness than otherwise.

I placed the key in the door and with some difficulty turned it. The door swung back on its hinges with a harsh grating sound, and involuntarily I felt a horrible feeling of loneliness come over me. Almost instinctively I turned round; nothing met my eyes but the quiet country bathed in the sunshine, and then, laughing at myself for my cowardice, I entered the house and closed the door after me. It was completely furnished; but all the furniture and chandeliers were covered, and the carpets were rolled up in a corner. I wandered on from the hall to the dining-room, then into the drawing-room, my footsteps echoing through the whole building. I was making memoranda in my pocket-book of things I wanted to ask the auctioneer. I can remember the whole scene as though it was only yesterday, and I swear that I had my senses fully about me. I looked at my watch and found it was half-past twelve; then I went up the lonely stairs and stood on the landing. Opposite to me was a long corridor of bedroom-doors, at the end of which another passage crossed it at right angles. There was little light in the passage I was looking down; but the other passage was lighted by some win-

dows which were out of sight, so that the end of the passage in which I was standing was brightly illuminated.

No sooner had I ascended the stairs and noticed the particulars I have before mentioned, when suddenly I felt an involuntary repetition of the feeling I had experienced at the door, and by some horrible fascination my attention was fastened on the light at the end of the passage. Now is your time to laugh if you like, but I don't feel like laughing, although it all happened twenty years ago; but as I was standing in that passage, by Heaven, I saw Clara Stanton come out of one of the bedrooms and walk down the passage! I felt my heart give one great leap into my mouth, and then it seemed to stop beating. My blood rushed all through me with a hot flush, and then I was cold as stone. I grasped the banisters for support and looked again. There was no mistaking it. Clara Stanton was walking slowly down the dark passage. Presently she emerged into the light part at the end, and turned her face towards me. I have told you that she always looked sad; but the utter misery and wretchedness on her face at that moment, I shall never forget. Slowly she passed across the end of the passage, and then the wall hid her and she was gone.

Soon my senses returned to me, and shouting 'Clara, Clara!' I ran to the bedroom-door from which I had seen her come. I had expected to find it open; but it was locked, although I *know* I had seen her come through it. Again the supernatural dread caught hold of me, and without a moment's thought I ran out of the house. It was hours before I recovered my equanimity, and even then nothing would have again persuaded me to have anything to do with that lonely house, and so by the next train I returned to H——.

The following day I sent a note over to Dr. Stanton, and asked him to call at my office; but the messenger returned with a reply to the effect that the doctor was unable to come. Miss Stanton had died suddenly on the previous day. My feelings had been so wrought upon, that I can hardly say the news surprised me, although you may imagine my sorrow. I immediately hastened to the doctor, and found the good man in the greatest trouble. I told him what had happened to me, and he turned as white as a sheet.

For some moments he could hardly speak. At length he managed to ask me if I recollected the time when I had seen Miss Stanton. I told him half-past twelve at noon.

'That was exactly the time she died,' he answered.

Then he told me her story. The property which had descended to the doctor belonged to the young naval officer she had loved. They had known each other from childhood, and were fondly devoted. When the young man came of age they were formally engaged, and there had been great rejoicings at C—— amongst the tenantry. Clara had taken part in them. It had been arranged that her lover should go for one more voyage before they were married, and that voyage was his last; for he had been drowned, as I have before told you, and Clara had been heart-broken ever since. The doctor knew she was ill, but he had no idea how dangerously. The day she had died, and on

which I saw her spirit, was the anniversary of the day on which she had heard of her lover's death.

There is nothing more to tell. The doctor sold the property, but I had nothing to do with it. What it was I saw, I don't know; why I saw it, I don't know; but never you assert again, old man, that it is impossible for a ghost to appear by daylight. I know it is possible, because I've seen one.

A VISIT TO THE CAVERNS OF HAN, IN BELGIUM.

Leaving the Hôtel Biron at Rochefort, the road turns to the right after two and a half miles, passing through a picturesque valley, and gradually ascending until a point is reached overlooking the village of Han-sur-Lesse. Here a steep descent brings one to the Hôtel de la Belle Vue, from which we started for the Grotte de Han, having first bespoken seats at the *table d'hôte.*

The entrance to these wonderful caverns is at a considerable height on the slope of the hill, at some little distance from the village. A party of about twelve persons, including myself and friend, with one guide to each three persons, entered the cavern. The guide under whose care we found ourselves was a child of about four years old; the paraffin lamp he carried was consequently just under our noses. Another drawback, besides the smell of the lamp, was the exceeding slipperiness of the ground, which constantly brought 'Attention au marche!' from our juvenile guide, shouted in a shrill treble voice; or 'Attention à la tête!' from the men, spoken in a deep bass.

How I wish that I could convey to the mind of the reader some faint idea of these marvellous caverns! Passage after passage, room after room, followed one another for four hours in the very bowels of the earth, each chamber decked with the most beautiful stalactite formations, or supported by natural columns, some of pure white marble, and glistening with the moisture from all sides. Fanciful forms, resembling in their quaintness things one reads of only in the gnome kingdom, rise from the ground or hang pendent from the roof. The 'Trône de Pluton,' 'Boudoir de Proserpine,' 'Galerie de la Grenouille,' are some of the names given to these curious formations. But when, after many windings through innumerable passages, we came to the splendid 'Salle du Dôme,' our wonder and admiration came to a climax. This magnificent chamber rises to a height of sixty feet. Its vast proportions were brought out to great advantage by the guides, who, torch in hand, ascended by natural steps nearly to the summit, whilst others lit up the scene from below.

At this moment the fantastic weirdness of the *tout ensemble* was

perfect. One extraordinary feature of these caverns is the continuous sound of rushing water heard from the river Lesse, which runs completely through the caverns, forming for itself an underground passage through the hill. The water, when reached, looks cold and dark indeed, and reminds one forcibly of Dante's *Inferno*. Charon's boat is ready, and we step on board. Gradually a pale light begins to steal in; the lamps are extinguished. One can scarcely believe that it is daylight we see creeping in, so like is it to the pale moonlight. Suddenly a fearful noise is heard, louder than any thunder, which dies away again in low rumblings; it is the gun fired by the guides to awaken the echoes of the cavern. The noise is simply appalling. Nearer and nearer we approach the light, and again, after four hours' darkness, we see, framed like a picture by the cavern's mouth, the bright sunlight and the green fields.

Have we been in another world? One might almost fancy so; but the stern reality of feeing the guides soon dispels the illusion. *Table d'hôte* followed, to which we did ample justice.

Let me, in conclusion, urge any who may find themselves at Jemelle or Rochefort to make a point of seeing the Grotto of Han.

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

STENOCHROMY.

A NEW process for printing a number of colours at the same time, so as to produce a kind of chromo-lithograph, has been recently invented by Mr. Otto Radde of Hamburg, and brought out under the name of 'stenochromy.' This formed the subject of an interesting paper recently read before the Society of Arts. In the ordinary process of chromolithography, each different colour is laid on by an impression from a different stone, so that if a dozen shades are required twelve different stones must be used. Of course the difficulty of obtaining exact coincidence between the spots where the adjacent or overlapping colours are applied, and the number of imperfect prints caused by some slight failure in applying the different colours at precisely the right relative points, increase with the number of stones employed; so that when twenty-five to thirty stones are used, and a sheet of paper is passed over them as many times, the difficulty of adjusting each time the position of the paper on the stones so that it should not be out of place by so much as the fiftieth of an inch causes a large percentage of spoilt copies from what is technically termed 'faulty registration.' Again, the cost of preparing a large number of different parts of the total design on a number of different stones, and of altering and correcting such stones as may be in some way defective on the first drawing, is a very serious item. The total cost of producing three hundred copies of a picture thirty-nine by twenty-seven inches, requiring twenty-five to thirty stones, each measuring forty-five

by thirty-three inches, amounts to about 500*l.*; and even in the copies thus produced there is by no means mathematical similarity between any pair of them, inasmuch as it is impossible to avoid differences in the thicknesses of colour laid on in some one or other of the various impressions from the different stones, as well as minute shades of difference due to slight alterations in the different positions of the various successive impressions. A process was brought out some time ago by Messrs. Johnson which was intended to supersede the necessity of using so many stones by producing a picture at one impression. In this process blocks of prepared colour were pieced together after the fashion of mosaic-work on the modern boxes, &c., ornamented with what is known as 'Tunbridge-ware': by printing off from the compound block thus prepared the required picture is produced in different colours, resembling a device in Berlin wool-work or a dissected puzzle. The chief objection to this process is that delicate gradations of tint are very difficult to produce; each little colour-block prints off a sharp definite outline, so that a proper blending of colours into one regular gradation is almost impossible. The prepared colour-blocks used in the composition of this kind of picture are formed by forcing the soft pigments through a mould; a modification of the process consists in producing the compound colour-block in considerable thickness, and then shaving off from it thin veneers, which are applied to wood, pasteboard, &c. This modification was shown at the Exhibition of 1872, but neither the modification nor the process itself appears to have come into anything like general use. The new process of stenochromy is something the same in principle, but differs in several important points. In the first place, the coloured compositions used are prepared by a special process in such a way that all the different pigments have about the consistence of butter on a cool day, and have identically the same specific gravity and yielding power; they must melt when exposed to a certain degree of heat, and must retain their original shade and brilliancy so perfectly that neither heat, sunlight, atmospheric action, nor analogous natural causes shall deteriorate them. These latter conditions are obtained by selecting only the best colouring matters known to be possessed of the required stability; of course this adds somewhat to the cost. Inferior and low-priced chromolithographs are often prepared with cheap colours not able to resist these altering influences, and hence such pictures are apt to fade and change in course of time. The colours being incorporated with the fatty and oleaginous materials so as to produce mixtures of a soapy consistency, the mixture is rendered fluid by heat on a tinned copper pan provided with a handle and a beak or spout for pouring; a frame of the size of the picture to be produced and about two inches deep is provided, and the pigment of the colour intended to form the groundwork of the picture is poured in, being prevented from running all over the frame to those spots where the particular colour is not required by slips of wood. The composition soon sets; the outline of the picture bordering on the groundwork is then traced on the solidified mass, and the colour cut away to outlines by means of a sharp knife held in a jointed frame like a lazy-tongs, which insures an exact vertical direction, whilst allowing

the knife to travel freely in any required lateral direction. Another colour-composition is then poured in, and a new outline again cut away; and so on until the picture is completed so far as the arrangement of the colour-masses is concerned. By means of a truly horizontal knife the upper surface is now levelled: the material on which the impression is to be made is then placed on the plane surface so obtained, and rollers passed over the whole with slight pressure; a film of colours is thus transferred to the paper, &c., employed. Another sheet is similarly printed in the same way, and so on, the total number of impressions thus yielded depending on the thickness of the compound colour-mass, which of course becomes slightly thinner after each impression on account of the removal of the film of colours from the upper surface. In order to allow for this gradual diminution in thickness special machinery is requisite for a slight raising up of the colour-block on each impression, so as to keep the upper surface always in the same position relatively to the guides which support the rollers. A peculiar kind of paper made from clean cotton rags is required to give the best results; just before use this is damped with a special resinous solution, and is then passed over a heated surface so as to allow any excess of moisture to evaporate. Where a high degree of finish is required in the picture thus produced the device adopted in chromo-lithography is employed, viz. printing over the series of colours constituting the picture itself a monochromatic film technically termed an 'overprint.' More than one overprint in different monochromes may be employed if required. The 'blending-plates' required to add on these monochromes of course increase the cost of the process; but this is also the case with the ordinary chromo-lithographic process, in which precisely the same overprints would be requisite for a given picture prepared by that process as would be were the picture executed by stenochromy. The great object of these overprints is to cause the colours apparently to blend harmoniously and gradually one with the other, as well as to mellow and soften the tints generally. Specimens of pictures executed on paper, thick cloth, furniture, gobelins, and the like by the new process have been exhibited, quite equal to the finest chromo-lithographs in execution and softness. With proper artistic execution of the underprint and stenochrome proper, and of the overprints, landscapes, water-colour paintings, &c., may be faithfully reproduced with all the softness and naturalness of tint that can be desired, the stiffness and hardness usually observable in printed copies being wholly avoided. A considerable part of the successful execution depends, without doubt, on the proper selection of the colouring matters employed in the production of the original colour-blocks; and one great advantage of the process is that each successive print must of necessity be mathematically the same in point of colour, outline, tone, and execution generally. As regards cost, it was stated that notwithstanding the various costly items in the process, a stenochromatic printer could, if he desired, work at about one-third or one-fourth of the cost of the lithographer.

FAC-SIMILE TELEGRAMS.

Amongst the problems which have engaged the attention of telegraph engineers for some years

is the subject of sending telegrams which shall be the exact *fac-simile* reproduction of the original message and of the handwriting of the sender; and various modes of arriving at this result have from time to time been proposed. One of the earliest of these depends on the principles involved in the ordinary instruments, by which the message is printed on chemically prepared paper, through which the current of electricity is made to flow in such a manner as to cause a decomposition of the chemicals contained in the paper, and so to develop colour. The paper being moved on by machinery (the motion of which is controlled by the electric current), the message is printed on the paper in the Morse alphabet of lines and dots, the length of the lines, &c., simply depending on the duration of the passage of the current, an instantaneous current producing a dot, and a current passing for a somewhat longer period giving rise to a line. In order to make the printed message a *fac-simile* of the one sent, the method is modified in the following way: the message is written on a sheet of tinfoil, or other conducting substance, with a quickly-drying resinous ink, non-conducting when dry; this prepared message is then placed in the sending-machine, which is so constructed that a thin bluntly-pointed metal slip is made to pass successively over every part of the paper by a kind of zigzag movement, not unlike the ploughing of a level field by a skilful hand, all the furrows being perfectly parallel and equidistant. Wherever the metal slip passes over the resinous ink the current is of necessity interrupted; whilst a continuous current flows as long as the metal touches the tinfoil. At the far end, a similar slip of metal is made to act as a pen, conveying the current through chemically prepared paper, which is traversed by the pen in precisely the same way as the tinfoil at the far end is by the receiving pointed slip of metal, the two instruments working synchronously. Whenever the current is interrupted by the passage of the receiving point over the resinous ink, the pen ceases to write, as it were; so that ultimately every part of the chemically prepared paper is coloured by the passage of the current except those portions corresponding in position on the paper to the resinous ink-marks on the tinfoil at the sending end of the telegraph line; in this way, therefore, a *fac-simile* of the original writing is obtained in white on a blue ground, supposing the chemicals in the paper are (as is usually the case) such as to develop Prussian blue by the passage of electricity. The importance of obtaining accurate duplicates of original messages is in certain instances very great, especially where figures involving monetary transactions are wired; an error on the part of a telegraph clerk might lead to very serious consequences. For instance, suppose a message is sent to a stockbroker, desiring him to sell out £1000 of such and such stock; if by accident a 0 be dropped in the message, or an extra 0 be interpolated, or if, as is stated to have once occurred, the sign £ be transmitted as a 7 (making in the above supposed case 71,000*l.* instead of 1000*l.*), clearly great inconvenience and pecuniary loss might result; and hence it is often well worth a sender's while to pay a considerably higher price for a telegram which will exactly reproduce his written directions. Of course the sending of a *fac-simile* message by such a process as the above requires the use of the tele-

graph wire for a longer time than when the message is sent in the ordinary way, and therefore must be paid for at a higher rate. A modification of this process was exhibited in action at the Philadelphia Exhibition. By this method, due to Messrs. W. E. Sawyer and J. G. Smith, it is now rendered possible to transmit with ease, not only *fac-similes* of handwriting, but also diagrams, weather-charts, and the like, and indeed any kind of writing or drawing that can be put upon paper: telegrams in cipher or in hieroglyphics are exactly reproduced without chance of error, the whole process of sending requiring but a short period. In this modification ordinary paper is used for the message, an ink being employed containing glycerine, or some oily substance which will not dry; powdered shellac is dusted over the writing as soon as finished, and the surplus dust blown away. The paper, with shellac adhering to all written parts, but nowhere else, is then pressed face downwards on to a hot zinc plate, so that the shellac becomes transferred to the zinc: the zinc plate is then bent into a cylinder, which is placed in the sending-machine and brought into contact with a steel point which has a vertical motion guided by a rack, and a screw placed on the axis of the zinc cylinder, which is made to revolve by clockwork. In this way the steel point is made to touch every part of the zinc cylinder successively in a spiral line. At the far end, a piece of chemically prepared paper is made to revolve synchronously in a precisely analogous receiving instrument: whenever the receiving steel point touches the shellac on this zinc cylinder the current is interrupted and the chemically prepared paper left white at the far end; whilst, just as in the old process, wherever the receiving-point touches the conducting surface between the writing marks, the current flows and the paper is stained at the other end. This process has been recently employed in the American Signal Service Department for the telegraphic transmission of weather-charts from the central office at Washington, instead of sending out by mail copies of these charts prepared at the central office: perfect copies are thus now sent in a very short period to places so far distant that the length of time required for delivery by mail formerly rendered them of little or no value; thus at San Francisco and New Orleans, and about a hundred more signal stations in the United States, weather-charts showing the conclusions arrived at in Washington from the consideration of the various meteorological reports received from the different observatories, can be had within a couple of hours of the receipt of these reports in Washington. The paper chart thus transmitted by telegraph is placed upon a clay mould of the general outline map required for all the series of charts, and the lines representing the *isobars* (places having the same barometric readings) and *isotherms* (lines of equal temperature), the force and direction of the wind, &c., transmitted are transferred to the mould by simply tracing; a cast of the mould is then made in type-metal, and from this cast the charts are printed off to any required extent. In connection with this process of *fac-simile* telegraphy an ingenious method of transmitting photographs by telegraph deserves notice, invented and patented some years ago by Mr. D. Winstanley; although the length of time required in the preparation of the transmitting apparatus

would prevent the use of this method for such purposes as telegraphing weather-charts, without taking into account other practical difficulties connected with the process. This method depends for its application on two principles: one, that in an engraving in mezzotint different shades are produced by the placing of a given number of black dots on a given area, according to the actual dimensions of the dots. Thus, supposing there are five hundred circular dots per square inch, the shade will appear progressively darker as the average diameter of each dot increases; if the dots be made successively one-hundredth, two-hundredths, three-hundredths of an inch in diameter, and so on, the shade becomes gradually darker when viewed from a short distance, even though there be absolutely the same number of dots on each square inch in each case. Secondly, on the principle involved in the Woodbury-type process for multiplying photographs by printing: in this process the photograph is taken, not upon a film of collodion prepared with compounds of silver as in ordinary photographs, but on a thin sheet of gelatine chemically prepared with chromium compounds. Wherever the light falls on such gelatine, the power of dissolving in hot water is lost; whilst on the shadows of the picture the gelatine still remains soluble. By pouring hot water on the exposed gelatine wherever the light has acted, the gelatine remains more or less unacted upon by the water, whilst in the shadows the gelatine is more or less completely washed away, according to the depth of shade. By drying this gelatine film a picture in a kind of *intaglio* is obtained, the depressions corresponding to the shadows, the parts more or less in relief to the lights. In the Woodbury process this dried picture is pressed against a sheet of metal, so as to transfer the impression thereto; when, by printing off in a transparent coloured ink of appropriate hue, a beautiful negative of the photograph is obtained, the lights of the picture taking more ink than the shadows (inasmuch as on the metal plate the lights of the original are represented by the deeper intaglios and the shadows by the parts in relief, just the reverse of the gelatine mould), and hence printing off darker. In order to obtain positives the process is somewhat varied: either an ordinary silver photograph is first taken and then transferred to gelatine, yielding a gelatine mould in which the lights of the original picture are cavities and shadows reliefs; so that by transferring the impression on this gelatine to metal and printing from the metal positives are at once obtained; or the original gelatine negative is moulded in plaster or some analogous substance, and the metal mould taken from this; or the first metal impression is made to furnish another, reversed by pressure, electrotyping, or the like. The application of these principles to the Winstanley process for transmitting photographs by telegraph is as follows: a photograph is taken on prepared gelatine, and treated with hot water so as finally to obtain the picture in intaglio and relief; a frame containing a large number of precisely similar wires ground down to points so as gradually to taper (exactly as pins do) is then placed over the hardened gelatine with the points downwards, and the whole gently tapped until the points have exactly accommodated themselves to the contour of the surface of the gelatine picture. By tightening screws, the wires

are then firmly fixed in position in the frame. The under surface of points is then filed down truly horizontal. Of course those points which rested on projecting portions of the gelatine mould will be much less filed down than those which sank into the cavities, and consequently projected further from the average level of the points in the frame; that is, the circular sections of the various pin-like wires developed by the filing will not be all of uniform diameter, those which corresponded to the deepest depressions in the gelatine (the shadows of the original picture) being more filed down than the others, and consequently presenting circular sections of greater diameter than the other wires respectively. It hence results that, if the filed-down points be inked with a roller and an impression printed off, a kind of mezzotint positive print of the original picture will be obtained. All parts of the picture will necessarily have the same number of dots per square inch; but the dots of the shadows will be greater in diameter than those of the lights, and hence the light and shade of the original picture will be exactly reproduced. In order to transmit the picture by telegraph, all that is required is to place the filed-down points opposite the receiving slip of metal in the early form of *fac-simile* telegraphing apparatus above described, when, as the slip of metal traverses the picture, dots will be produced at the far end exactly corresponding with those of the original at the sending end.

SERICULTURE.

At various times attempts have been made to rear silkworms in England, for the purpose of growing silk in this country; but the climatic aberrations to which we are so unfortunately subject have almost invariably rendered such schemes abortive—at any rate, as commercial speculations. There is, however, no particular difficulty in rearing the silk-moth itself in this country, and in obtaining what is known to sericulturists as 'grain' (the eggs of the silk-moth) of a fine and healthy quality. During the last few years great injuries have been occasioned to the *magnaneries*, or silk-farms, of Southern Europe by the rapid spread of diseases peculiar to the silkworm. One of these complaints, *pébrine*, has been distinguished by Pasteur as analogous to fungoid growths, or perhaps to *trichiniasis*, inasmuch as the afflicted larvæ have every part of their bodies attacked by small ovoid corpuscles, which gradually but surely kill them; usually, indeed, not before they have deposited eggs, but in that case the worms reared from such eggs are always infected and perish prematurely. The other complaint, *flacherie*, is more analogous to cholera, and is eminently contagious—so far as silkworms are concerned, that is to say. It seems very probable that these diseases are caused in great part by want of cleanliness and space in the *magnaneries*, and by the practice of breeding in and in. The injuries to the silk-growers, however, have been so serious that eggs are eagerly bought up imported from Japan, Australia, and elsewhere, and attempts on a large scale are being now made to introduce sericulture into different countries, with a view to producing either silk or grain, in consequence of the falling off of the South European supplies. Two millions sterling have been paid to Japan for silkworms' eggs sent over to France and Italy, notwithstanding the adverse chances of rearing due to climatic differences and trans-

port. In a paper on this subject recently read before the Society of Arts, Mr. B. Francis Cobb advocates the rearing of silkworms in England by persons of narrow income as a convenient means of adding thereto, the object being, not to prepare silk itself for the market, but simply to grow and collect healthy grain. Mulberry-trees are moderately plentiful in England, so that slips can be readily obtained for the growth of the requisite food; and to many cottagers it would be a boon could they grow in their small gardens these trees and find a ready sale for the leaves. By attending to certain precautions duly detailed in the paper, a sound healthy breed can readily be obtained and multiplied. So far from the fact that some worms and moths are killed by the climate being prejudicial, it is found that the survivors are of enhanced strength and health; indeed, cultivation of silkworms on trees in the Alps has been resorted to as a means of obtaining stronger and healthier broods, on the Spartan principle of killing off the weakly children by rigorous training and exposure, and thus only permitting the healthy and vigorous to survive and perpetuate the race. The number of worms thus killed off from a year's hatching is considerably less than the amount of thinning that must always take place whenever the *magnanerie* is of limited dimensions, in order to give sufficient room for the larvæ. With all this loss, and the necessary subsequent thinning by killing off the smaller chrysalides, Mr. Cobb calculates that whilst the expense of rearing the worms from one ounce of grain (about 40,000 eggs) would be about 20*l.*, the quantity of grain that would be thence produced would be something like 190 ounces, worth quite 190*l.*; and even admitting that the profit is overstated, and that in small households not more than half an ounce of grain could be hatched and developed, still there is sufficient margin to allow of sericulture being made a noteworthy 'aid to thrift' in this country. Besides, the occupation of looking after the worms during the few weeks when they require special attention is not laborious, and can be readily and pleasantly carried on by ladies.

THE GAS-WELLS OF PENNSYLVANIA.

The two most productive of these wells are those of Burns and Delamater, about thirty miles from Pittsburgh; these are bored down to the fourth layer of sand, and are about 1600 feet in depth. According to Professor J. Laurence Smith, the former never yielded any oil; but the latter, at first, yielded considerable quantities of petroleum; now, however, it gives off nothing but gas, which issues with a velocity of 1700 feet per second (equal to that of the most rapid cannon-ball). The upward pressure of this current of gas is so great that plummet lines, weighing 800 kilogrammes (about 16 cwt.) can be drawn out by the hand alone; about a million cubic feet of gas per hour are thus given off, or 1400 *tons* of gas daily. At the well in a 5⅝ inch pipe, the pressure is 100 lbs. per square inch; in a smaller pipe it is more than 200 lbs. per square inch; large engines are worked by the gas-current pressure alone. A large number of pipes diverge from this well, leading the gas to furnaces for iron smelting, &c., for which purposes it is largely used. The waste-pipe for the surplus gas gives a pillar of flame 40 feet high, the roaring of which is audible, on a calm night, fifteen miles off; at a distance of four miles this

sounds like a locomotive close at hand; at a furlong it is like the roar of artillery; whilst close by, it resembles a thousand boilers all blowing off steam simultaneously. For a distance of fifty feet around this flame the earth is burnt to a lava-like mass; outside this radius, for two acres, the vegetation is tropical, and a perpetual summer reigns even in winter, when the surrounding mountains are covered with snow. The gas contains a large amount of the hydro-carbon designated by chemists 'ethane,' closely related to, though not identical with, the 'marsh-gas,' or 'methane,' constituting the major part of the fire-damp of collieries; its illuminating power is equal to 7½ candles, ordinary coal-gas having the value of 16 candles; its heating power is 25 per cent greater than that of good bituminous coal. Some of the wells of Pennsylvania have given off gas for twelve years, and the yield is still undiminished; one well at Fairview has fed more than one hundred engines for five years, and the yield is at the present day as great as at first. Several towns are lighted by natural gas from these wells. In many places the gas is largely used as fuel for domestic purposes, also for blast furnaces and for puddling iron; less damage is done to the brickwork of the furnaces where the gas is employed as fuel than where coal is used. The gas from them burns well, and that from several others differs somewhat from the Delamater well, in containing considerable quantities of free hydrogen and marsh-gas.

NEW BOOKS.

In the province of fiction there are some interesting works to notice, and in this summer weather what is more delightful than a delicious novel? Severer studies may now be laid aside; and on the green turf, and beneath abundant shadow, it is most pleasurable to read pages which amuse without exciting, and reward attention without laying too heavy a demand upon it. Two of our established novel-writers, whose pleasant and acknowledged mission it is to provide sweets for the public taste, have opportunely put forth two new novels. We have read them both in leisurely moments, and it has made us enjoy our leisure greatly. It is something almost like ingratitude to turn a critical eye upon such stories, and judge them in cold blood. But, speaking deliberately enough, there is very little in these works at which criticism may cavil. The worst fault in Mr. Trollope's work is the title, *The American Senator;** whereas the 'American Senator' is by no means the hero, or even an approximation to a hero, but a sort of Parabasis, as in Greek Comedy, who comes forward to deliver his opinion on things in general, and the Game Laws in particular. We believe that Mr. Trollope indulges the harmless hallucination of believing that he is a great politician, and Senator Gotobed is, to some extent, a sort of mouthpiece for airing his political convictions. We think, however, that an American would be permitted to give a perfectly free expression to his opinions, in a lecture at St. James's Hall, under the presidency of the Foreign Secretary, without any danger of the police being called in to quell a riot. For the rest, we all know Mr. Trollope, his 'tricks and his manners;' and very pleasant and amusing they are. He shifts the kaleidoscope, and we

* *The American Senator.* By Anthony Trollope. Three vols. (Chapman & Hall.)

have all the gay array of the old figures, with the requisite changes of scenery and decorations. We have the squires and parsons—Mr. Trollope's parsons have all a curious likeness in externals, and he does not seek to go below externals—the young ladies, the middle-aged ladies, and the old ladies, and all other *dramatis personæ* with which he has familiarised us. Mr. Trollope has always made a deep study of the female heart. He describes love-affairs with all the freshness of two-and-twenty. He retains all the glint and the glamour of youth. Still we think that he is peculiarly hard on the young woman who wants to marry Lord Rufford. She is not a very nice young woman, speaking euphemistically, and not to be compared with Mary Masters, who is one of the sweetest of the young ladies in Mr. Trollope's crowded gallery; but just the person who, with a good mother and good husband, would do very well. He lets her off easily, however; and of course benignant Fortune, after Mr. Trollope's amiable wont, gives abundant wealth and means to the happy young couple. With an easy poetical justice he satisfactorily settles everything in this best of all possible worlds. As for Mr. Trollope, we look upon him as a national benefactor, a prop and pillar of the existing order of things, and wait for his novel just as we do for the annual note of the cuckoo or the nightingale's song.

It is Mr. Reade's weakness to aim at what he calls 'a solid fiction.' Story-telling is his strength, and 'solidarity' is his weakness. Like all his stories, the present one* is highly dramatic, which includes being decidedly 'stagey.' It abounds with situations, with spice, with epigrams, with exaggerations, with violent contrasts, and with those grand virtuous sentiments which never fail to elicit the applause of the gallery. The title, *A Woman Hater*, is a forcible one, but it is not true to the contents or character of the work. The squire of the story loves his sister, is kind and gracious to her friend, is an excellent nephew to his aunt; but having already singed his wings with flame, he has an insuperable and not unnatural objection to being married by storm. Unfortunately he and his sister respectively fall in love with a married woman and her husband, the latter being one of those handsome genial scamps who are so helpful in novels, and so pernicious in actual life. In the good old-fashioned novel, the married state used to be the Rubicon beyond which honest folk did not pass, and was supposed permanently to settle a man's fate for him. This is the mode with our great masters of fiction, Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray. The present idea is to regard wedlock as a kind of tentative intermediate state, when hero and heroine are to be united after the intervention of death or divorce. Now Mr. Reade is a man of genius, and is not dependent for his effects on breakages of the seventh commandment. Of course the only way to cut the knot is to kill off the inconvenient husband, who in real life would have respectfully, but firmly, declined to be killed off. Mr. Reade's serious 'fad,' in the present work, is the right of women to practise as doctors. His 'Miss Gale, M.D.,' is the best of women-doctors; but we do not like her, and she contrasts unfavourably with the sweet womanly heroine of the story. Women make excellent

* *A Woman Hater.* A Novel. By Charles Reade. Three vols. (Blackwood.)

doctors for women and for children; but when they want to doctor men as well, then the great Woman's Rights question emerges, and we are sorry to find a man of Mr. Reade's sense and ability on the side of the shrieking sisterhood. If they want to sit in Parliament and to occupy the professions, why should they not act as police-women and serve our ironclads? Mr. Reade fails to deal fairly and impartially with the question. With such treatment of a subject, we can well understand why novel-readers object to a serious purpose in a novel.

Mr. Dangerfield's story of *Alix Fairford** is open to the same moral objection, that the interest is hardly a legitimate interest. The heroine marries, in some haste and more unwisdom, one Gerald Consett, who at the outset is not such a bad sort of a fellow, but, under Mr. Dangerfield's literary manipulation, to satisfy the exigences of the story, becomes a tyrant and would-be murderer. All this time she is loved by a much worthier man, who, we feel, ought to have married her. In ordinary life, as people make their bed, so they must lie upon it; and the blunder of a mistaken marriage, as such seems to us, is one that happens every day in the week. The plot of the story is that the young bride should be thoroughly disillusionised in respect to her husband, and that she should eventually marry the right man. This is quite clear (we had almost said, clumsily clear) from the beginning of things. In his description of country life, in his seafaring pages, in his hunting pages, Mr. Dangerfield is thoroughly at home, and carries his readers with him; and it is quite unnecessary for a writer of his ability to rest the interest of his story on a morally unsafe plot.

* *Alix Fairford.* By J. Dangerfield. Two vols. (Sampson Low & Co.)

Mr. Blades has done a good service in issuing a book* which exactly meets some of the requirements of the Caxton Celebration. Many years ago he published a work about Caxton, which he has now reissued in a new form which Caxton himself would not fail to admire. There are not, after all, many facts which can be gleaned about Caxton. In the interval which has elapsed between his two works, Mr. Blades has discovered just one further fact through the means of the Record Office. Caxton was a married man, and left a married daughter behind him. The few facts which comprise several autobiographical notices afford a sufficient index to a thoroughly noble and genuine English character. Those who have an antiquarian taste for old English type will thoroughly enjoy the specimens presented in these pages and the other antiquarian lore which Mr. Blades has collected. Caxton's press was a prolific one. He issued many books, and as the early printers did not give dates and places some of his books can hardly be identified. The early copies fetch immense sums; one belonging to the late Duke of Roxburgh brought more than a thousand pounds. Caxton possessed undoubted literary power; he was not only printer, but also to a considerable extent author and editor. Moreover he used all the shrewdness and calculation of a good man of business, mixed with a moderate amount of legitimate speculation. He learned his craft abroad, evidently with the intention of earning his livelihood by the pru-

* *Biography and Typography of William Caxton.* By William Blades. (Trübner.)

dent use of the Gottenburg invention. Perhaps he hardly recognised the full worth of the business he was inaugurating; but as a far-sighted man he would have discerned that the uses were practically illimitable. As Byron said, in words which the Caxton orators ought to have quoted,

> 'A single drop of ink,
> Falling like rain upon a thought, produces
> That which makes thousands, ay and millions, think.'

Mr. Gladstone and Dean Stanley have discoursed excellently well upon the subject; but for a permanently interesting memorial, which well deserves a place on the library-shelf, commend us to Blades.

Many persons will read with great interest and pleasure Principal Shairp's new volume of *Essays.** The Principal's recent election to the Chair of Poetry at Oxford has given considerable additional interest to his writings. We are convinced that he will prove a most excellent Professor of Poetry. He will hardly write such Latin as the late Mr. Keble, or such English as Mr. Matthew Arnold. He is not perhaps very strong or very original; but he is preëminently an apostle of culture, and all his writings are marked by a delicate and discriminating criticism which it is a pleasure and instruction to peruse. The work naturally falls into two portions, the first being general essays, more peculiarly the author's own, and the second being a series of criticisms on what may be called the English poets of Nature. Two subjects especially emerge, which Professor Shairp has treated extremely well. Under the first of the heads we have specified is the relation of Nature to science, and science to Nature. Under the second head is the chapter on Wordsworth, which, though partaking too much of the character of a general literary review, has a more careful, accurate, and appreciative account of Wordsworth's attitude to 'Nature' than we have elsewhere seen. Some of the other literary judgments—such as those on Thomson and Cowper, Collins and Burns—appear to us to be somewhat trite and obvious, and inferior to what might have been produced. In reference to the questions at issue between science and poetry, Dr. Shairp evidently has in mind Campbell's lines, which, however, he does not quote:

> 'When science from Creation's face
> Enchantment's veil withdraws,
> What lovely visions yield their place
> To cold material laws!'

Dr. Shairp says that when readers and poets are both carefully familiarised with scientific laws, the poets will use these facts just as they now use natural imagery. He instances the certain amount of use of scientific facts which we find in *In Memoriam.* Our author finely says: 'Even where the views of science are not only strange, but even at first crude and repulsive, imagination can soften their asperity and subdue their harsher features. Just as when a railway has been driven through some beautiful and sequestered scene, outraging its quiet and scarring its loveliness, we see Nature in time return, and, "busy with a hand of healing," cover the raw wounds with grass, and strew artificial mounds and cuttings with underwood and flowers. It seems then that, while science gives to poetry new regions to work upon, poetry repays the debt by familiarising and humanising what science has discovered. Such is their mutual interaction.'

Many of his remarks on Nature

* *On the Poetic Interpretation of Nature.* By J. C. Shairp, LL.D. (Edinburgh: Douglas.)

are extremely acute and interesting. He repeatedly refers to Canon Mozley's marvellous sermon on 'Nature,' the best sermon of the kind since Bishop Butler preached on 'Human Nature.' Following Mozley, he points out how the beauty of Nature is something in sort distinct, though in fact inseparable, from the machinery of Nature. Nature of herself will not teach us lessons of morality and religion. 'Nay, Nature taken alone will often appear no benign mother at all, no dwelling-place of a kindly spirit; but an inexorable and cruel sphinx, who rears children and makes them glad a little while, only that she may the more relentlessly destroy them.' Man must proceed to Nature from the facts of human nature, and then in his helplessness and evil he sees beyond the immediate beauty something higher, 'the foreshadow and prophecy of a higher glory yet to be.' He well points out how the intelligent love of Nature found a new starting-point in France through Rousseau, and in Germany through Goethe. In England the same was done through Wordsworth, and done much better if only through that intense morality in which Rousseau and Goethe were utterly deficient. We have a careful analysis of what he called Wordsworth's doctrine of Nature. It is a remarkable fact that Wordsworth was never more studied by the best minds of our era than at the present time. Macaulay said of the 'Prelude,' 'There are the old raptures about mountains and cataracts; the old flimsy philosophy about the effects of scenery on the mind; the old crazy mystical metaphysics; the endless wildernesses of dull, flat, prosaic declamations interspersed.' Dr. Shairp somewhat sardonically says: 'No one need be astonished at this estimate by Lord Macaulay. We see but as we feel. To him, being such as he was, it was not given to feel or to see the things which Wordsworth most cared for.' At the present time Wordsworth receives much more attention than Macaulay. In some respects the 'Prelude' is the most valuable of his works, certainly in letting us understand the poet's own nature and character. We think that most readers of this work will find an intelligent love of Nature quickened through its perusal.

Mr. Jewitt* discourses, with the ease of a master, on a considerable number of subjects in English antiquities, some information concerning which will be abundantly useful to the general public. He gives in a concise definite way a full explanation of subjects which are on the lips of most men, but about which few could stand an examination on paper. He commences with the subject of Celtic burrows, and in orderly sequence leads us on to flint instruments, Roman remains, arms, and armour, ancient pottery, sepulchral brasses, coins, church-bells, stained glass, personal ornaments. It is wonderful how he has been able to pack so much matter in so little space. On the stone circles we especially note his remarks on those in Cornwall and on Dartmoor. Those who are deeply attached to our ancient monuments will be reminded with delight that the Roman law punished with death those who defaced them, and that Queen Elizabeth signed with her own hand proclamations to stop the destruction of stones and brasses. Quantities of the brasses were stolen for the sake of the

* *Half Hours with some English Antiquities.* By Llewellynn Jewitt, F.S.A. (Hardwicke & Bogue.)

money-value of the metals. Mr. Jewitt quotes Mr. Evans, the celebrated antiquary (who has lately received his D.C.L. at Oxford), in favour of the conclusion that we have British coins so early as B.C. 200. These are imitations of Greek and Roman coins, and we confess that we are not quite satisfied respecting the alleged antiquity. In the matter of 'campanology' our author mentions a bell which has obvious uses, but about which we confess our previous ignorance, 'the Pudding Bell, so called because it is said to be intended to give notice to the housewives at home that they may put the dinners on the table by the time the congregations reach their homes.' On ancient cups we have the inscription Wæs Hæl, 'Be thou in health;' whence our 'Wassail.' The chapter on tapestry is very interesting, especially the section on the Bayeux tapestry, on which writers, such as Mr. Freeman, Lord Lytton, and Mr. Tennyson, have built up so much early English history. It is a continuous piece of needlework, 214 feet in length and between 19 and 20 in breadth, describing William's life, from the arrival of Harold's ambassadors to inform him of his detention by Guy, Count of Ponthieu, to the close of the battle of Hastings. The tapestry was removed from the cathedral in 1803 to the town-hall. Mr. Jewitt's is an extremely interesting and instructive book.

It is the custom for people to resort to the fashionable spas. Fashion is often foolish, but at the same time it is humanly omnipotent; but the result is that our English spas are unduly neglected. Yet it would be difficult to find any foreign spa which in some kinds of illness excels Bath and Buxton. Indeed we have known people who have travelled abroad, and then come back to drink waters which had been close to them for years. Dr. Spender, a well-known Bath physician, has given us a book of much value and interest on the Bath waters.* The medical portion of the work will mainly be of interest to his medical brethren and to that numerous order of patients who, wisely or not, insist upon knowing everything about their illnesses. But Bath is a city that abounds with matters of a literary, social, and historical interest; and to these Dr. Spender does not fail to do justice, such at least as can be done within the limits of a scientific work. On the Continent people go to the baths in the summer, but English people only go to Bath in the winter; and Dr. Spender's object is to secure what all watering-places would like to secure—a season all the year round. Dr. Spender's argument, however, is cogent enough; and we can commend his work as one that unites considerable literary charm to much scientific research.

THE ENVIRONS OF LONDON.

Lord Beaconsfield in one of his novels speaks in tones of enthusiasm about the environs of London. There are few capital cities so dingy at the centre, but none so lovely in its ceinture. The suburbs of Paris are hardly to be compared with the suburbs of London. This loveliness is most apparent in the opening days of spring. The railway with its multiplied conveniences allures the tourist to far-off lakes and mountains and seaboard in our own and in other lands. This is well. But it is also well that the Londoner should know all about the neighbourhood of London.

* *The Bath Thermal Waters, Historical, Social, and Medical.* By John Kent Spender, M.D. (Churchills.)

South and west, the environs are especially beautiful. People who have not much time to travel, and like to travel near home, can hardly do better than make a circuit of the environs of London, in a phaeton, if they will, or, almost better still, by pedestrianising.

Many pleasant expeditions of this kind do we gratefully recall. The course of the silvery Thames has always been especially pleasing to us, chiefly so when set free from the trammels of time and subserviency to return tickets. We have followed the course of the imperial river from its *embouchure* to where its seven fountains spring beneath a cluster of leafy trees in an obscure Gloucestershire hamlet. It must be owned that the nearer Thames has very much changed its character within recent years. That fine Mall at Chiswick immediately develops into a congeries of miserable houses, in striking contrast to the famous villa where the Prince and Princess once gave their garden-parties. Brentford is one long, dark, dirty street. The Middlesex bank of the river is for miles almost one continuous town; but the left bank, with the old towing-path, is free for miles. The broad reaches of the river seem clearer within recent years. The genuine Londoner knows no more thorough enjoyment than to wander forth on a holiday by rail or boat to Kew. Leaving the gardens on the left, he lounges by the river-side past Isleworth on the opposite bank to Richmond. Then he ascends the famous hill for that famous view, and devises further wanderings. He takes the route through Richmond Park, past Lord Russell's house to Ham gate, and then across the gorsy common to the long avenues of Ham House. The deserted appearance of the old magnificent mansion is positively a blot on suburban London. We think of the days when gay companies ascended the steps and walked through the avenues to the water-gate. Almost opposite is the Duc d'Aumale's place, which is now converted into the Orleans Club. From Twickenham ferry we row up to Teddington Lock, having refreshed ourselves at the ait on the river. At Teddington you are close to Bushey Park and the gardens and galleries of Hampton Court. We venture to say that this expedition is the pleasantest and most easily manageable of any in the vicinity of London.

We prefer taking as the starting-point some spot on the Thames where it has ceased to be tidal, and wandering at will through the country-side. How many such a sweet spot there is!—the lazy fishing-village of Shepperton, and Arnold's Laleham close by; Blackpots, with the Windsor scenery at hand; Bisham Woods, Medmenham Abbey, Clieveden's fair domain, Pangbourne, and Streetley. Summer picture-like days come forth in memory—pure enjoyment, chance companionship, pleasant adventures; and all through the vision the silvery Thames comes gliding on with its melody and freshness.

If you want to get to the really pretty places outside London, as a rule you must get out of the postal districts, and come nearer to the twenty-mile limit. You will find lovely bits of landscape at times, so to speak, islanded amid bricks and mortar; but you have, as a rule, to get further and further away from town before you come to them. The best plan is, with the help of Mr. Thorn's book, to settle the programme, acquire our information, and add to it from other sources. Many of us remember the time when Norwood Hill was the chosen resort of gipsies, and a shady country lane ran through the pretty village of Aner-

ley. It is not so far to Chislehurst and the Crays, and there is many a lovely Kentish village as sequestered as in the days so long since gone by. We like the old driving-road from London to Brighton. It is a noble road, often with immense margins of broad turf, and the country lanes branching out on either side will lead you into noble scenery of wood and downs. Then we affect greatly the northern heights of London and the great North road, and own to a weakness for the Welsh Harp, liking the fishing, the *al fresco* life, but not bargaining for a torpedo. If you want a patch of perfect loveliness, whither a thousand painters have come in their day, commend us to Burnham Beeches, a tract free, open, richly wooded, as in the days of the Conquest. For most of us the option lies between few and expensive outings and constant and economic journeys. It cannot be too much impressed upon the tourist that the more thorough his change, and the further removed from the beaten track, the more restorative does the change become, and at a less expense is it effected.

LONDON SOCIETY.

SEPTEMBER 1877.

THE RECOVERED ESTATE.

Lescombe Hall, the property of Lescombe Lescombe, Esq., was a property of its kind exceedingly pleasant and attractive. It was situated on a promontory, in one of our south-western counties, which stretched somewhat broadly into the sea, terminating in a point, on which were situated the picturesque ruins of an ancient chapel, which, in the days of faith, pious fishermen had erected to their patron saint. The house itself was sheltered from the sea-breeze by low-lying hills; it was well-nigh covered with ivy; an ancient colony of rooks had built for generations in the tall trees; a pretty cottage, instead of the modern kind of edifice, served as a lodge to the park-like grounds; and all the land within the promontory, strictly so called, formed the Home Farm. Other land there was out-lying the Home Farm, where labourers' cottages, the best in the whole county, lay, nestled each in its own holding, —a veritable model village, although it did not arrogate to itself that title, as the manner of some pharisaical villages is. Beyond this the Lescombe estates did not go, although a few generations back they extended over a dozen thousand acres, which were now broken up into farms and holdings and lesser estates. But the owner of the Hall was the lord of the manor; and whether by courtesy or right, he had the shooting over the whole of the original estate. But the present story is not concerned, as so many pleasant stories are, with ancestral acres and the ancestral hall. It is rather concerned with Egyptian bonds and Turkish securities. The father of our present Mr. Lescombe was a man who had done a great deal of prosperous business in the money-marts. Just as he had made a competent fortune he found that the hall, manor, village, and advowson of Lescombe, with divers rights of fishing and shooting, were in the market. It was a curious coincidence that the name of this property should be the same as his own name. It took the old man's fancy hugely that he should be Lescombe of Lescombe. The former people who had it were of another name, probably derived from another property. But to any man of the name of Lescombe who should buy Lescombe there would be an ancestral hall, not to mention ancestors, all ready provided. So

when the great estate was parcelled out and broken up, the Hall and the Home Farm and some out-lying lands were sold to Mr. Lescombe, who was formerly of the Stock Exchange, but who now became Lescombe of Lescombe. He had a son born to him in this country abode, and, still further to strengthen the idea of territoriality, he had him christened by the name of Lescombe alone. You could hardly have anything stiffer and stronger in the territorial line than Lescombe Lescombe of Lescombe.

But the transformation of the stockbroker into the squire did not altogether work well. The old gentleman pined after business amid his lawns and groves. He could not spend the whole of his time in admiring his own grandeur. He went out shooting; but the recoil of the gun pretty well threw him over. He went out fishing; but as, on the first occasion, very rough weather nearly sent him to the fishes, he settled that 'this quest was not for him.' There were only a few neighbours, who did not care for a new man. The Lord-Lieutenant declined to put him in the Commission of the Peace. But what troubled him most of all was that the territorial idea did not seem at all likely to be carried out in its integrity. He had only one living son, a few daughters who did not count for anything, and this son marrying had one daughter. It seemed likely, therefore, that the first Lescombe of Lescombe would be the last. It was hard lines, and the old man took it to heart. He would probably have lived much longer if he had not settled at Lescombe, but had continued his Stock Exchange business with a country box at Wimbledon.

It takes three generations to make a gentleman, arguing on the unfavourable hypothesis that the original Lescombe of Lescombe hardly came under that denomination. But in the third generation the Lescombe line burst into radiant flower. Gertrude Lescombe was a lily among lilies, a lady among ladies. An only child, motherless, living in a remote part of the country, her father's companion and help in everything, she had an unusual strength and decision of character. Her father, born and bred in the country, had taken heartily to the pursuits which his own father had not cared for. The neighbouring squires called on him and liked him. The Lord-Lieutenant of the county invited him to dinner, and asked him to be a magistrate. The Bishop of the diocese, holding a confirmation at Lescombe church, stayed at Lescombe Hall, and hoped that if Mr. Lescombe came to town he would look him up at the Athenæum Club. People commonly said that Gertrude Lescombe would be a great heiress and a capital wife. A capital wife she would certainly be to any man happy enough to get her, but as things were going on it was by no means so clear that she would really be an heiress.

Lescombe Hall was kept up, not by the Lescombe lands, which we have seen were limited, but by a very large sum in ready money which the stockbroker had bequeathed to his son. A hundred thousand pounds is a very warm sum; but it takes a great deal of caution and trouble to place it in safe investments. It had always been a deeply implanted maxim in Lescombe Lescombe's mind that he should never put all his eggs into one basket. This may be very true as a general adage. But egg after egg may be broken, or basket after basket may be lost. This was unfortunately the case in

the present instance. He thought he had distributed his coin in so many good securities that he had made himself quite safe. But when Dame Fortune begins to depress her wheel, nothing can stop that unfavourable process. Egg after egg went smash. He went into a coal-mine: the price of coal fell. He took shares in a bank: the bank broke, and the shares were put into heavy contributions. He went into a railway, and no dividend was declared. He sold out Egyptians at a heavy loss. The Turkish bonds confiscated half his remaining income. A hundred thousand pounds is a great deal; but it will soon look foolish under such an accumulation of disasters. As a matter of fact, it evaporated entirely. It is unnecessary to go through the different stages of a sad experience which has become only too common a one in recent history. It became necessary that the estate itself should be sold to satisfy outstanding demands, and to provide a modest subsistence for a retreat at Cheltenham or Bath.

Two young men were sitting in the smoking-room of a London club. They had dined together, had sipped coffee and curaçoa, had had a game of billiards, and now, according to the fashion of these days, were going in for aërated waters and spirits. They were smoking meditative cigars, and were adopting that earnest business talk which men take up when their faculties are freshened up a few hours after dinner. They were evidently the kind of men who would sit up to any hour of the night, and get up at any hour of the morning.

'I wish everybody had your luck,' said the junior. 'A legacy of ever so much money with no other condition than that you should lay it out in land. A cool hundred thousand!'

It was not very clear how even such a sum could be regarded as a matter of temperature. Major Eveleigh simply reëchoed the phrase.

'A cool hundred thousand.'

'And how are you getting on about investing in land?'

'Parker—he's my man of business—and I am doing what we can, inserting advertisements and looking out for what advertisements come in the way. We have been having a splash in the *Times*, the *Field*, and so on.'

'And what have you heard of?'

'O, several things. There's a very good place not so far from Sandringham, lots of game and fishing. Then there's another in Cheshire, with a lot of very good houses about. Then there's a glorious place in North Wales, with a couple of lynns and a salmon river all to yourself, as good as being in Norway. Then there's another place which I have heard of which would probably suit me best of all, only I'm afraid that there is hardly enough land, Lescombe, down in the west countries.'

'Never heard of it.'

'It's an uncommonly pretty place, though the world knows nothing of its prettiness. I know it very well, although I have never been there. I think I must run down and see it. The fact is that it once belonged to my own ancestors, and my mother often used to tell me how she spent her childish days there. It was all sold off, as the proceeds had to be divided among a lot of us. The present owner has the same name as the estate, but he wants to sell it, and will take a fair price. I must get Parker to see if there is any more land to be had in the neighbourhood. I have written

to Mr. Lescombe to say that I shall probably run down and look at the place, more especially as I had an old association with it.'

Just at this moment a page entered the smoking-room and handed Major Eveleigh a letter on a salver.

'By Jove, it's the Lescombe postmark! Excuse me if I read it. Light up again, old man.'

The Major read the letter and appeared much gratified by the contents.

'This is really very kind and gentlemanly. Read it, Hardy.'

'"Lescombe Hall, June 18."

'Anniversary of the battle of Waterloo,' murmured Mr. Hardy.

'Quite right, Hardy. Whatever else we forget, we will never forget the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo.'

Mr. Hardy went on with the letter.

'"Dear Sir,—If you have any idea of coming into our part of the country, we shall be extremely pleased if you will come and stay here as long as may suit your convenience. If you think of purchasing the place, this will give you the opportunity of acquainting yourself minutely with all the details of the property. What you say about the hall having originally belonged to your family is full of interest to me. Their tradition still lingers in the countryside, and is uniformly favourable to them. I shall be extremely pleased to have the opportunity of showing hospitality to one who no doubt is a worthy descendant of the old owners, and may be the owner himself. You probably know that we are rather sequestered and the neighbourhood is thin, but we will do our best to make your stay pleasant.

"Yours faithfully,

"LESCOMBE LESCOMBE."'

It was quite a new sensation to Major Eveleigh to find himself in the pleasant guest-chamber of the old mansion at Lescombe. From this chamber he caught a distant view of the sea, and in another direction he looked beyond the carriage-drive and the meadows to the little village and its gray tower, 'standing four-square to every wind that blows.' Major Eveleigh afterwards declared that quite a remarkable mental mood came upon him as he awoke that first morning in the guest-chamber.

'I assure you, Hardy,' he once said, months and months afterwards, to his old friend, 'I felt a most singular sensation. The room, and every object in the room, seemed strangely familiar to me. I seemed to be in a place which was perfectly familiar to me. Was it a transmitted feeling from my ancestors that I was sharing in what had been their experiences, or was it a prophetic feeling about times to come?'

He had wondered very much who the 'we' could be; he had accidentally heard that there was no Mrs. Lescombe. Did Lescombe have an editorial habit of describing his own individuality as 'we,' or had he any people of his own who would help to make his visit a pleasant one? He discussed the matter as he went down by the express, and came to the sage conclusion that time would show. He came in late, for the train had been delayed, and, after some sherry-and-water, had gone to bed.

We have made him express his feelings when he first awoke next morning. He tubbed, and felt prepared for breakfast and business. When he came down, the 'we' was most satisfactorily explained. Miss Lescombe was presiding, fresh and fair as morning itself, perhaps with a little con-

straint about her, but with a natural graciousness which would not, for a moment, allow him to suppose himself an unwelcome guest. Great headway was made with the breakfast, but none with the business. The curious thing was, this business was soon relegated into the background, and then seemed to vanish. Squire Lescombe showed his guest over the house and outbuildings, conservatories and gardens; showed his horses, dogs, and stock; but it was entirely in the way that country gentlemen treat their visitors. Then he took him into the old church, where the Major worked up the 'arrivals, junctions, and departures' of his ancestors. It was very strange that the old clerk should remember more about his grandfather than he did himself, and the old clerk was liberally rewarded for his good memory. Then they went down to the little bay, and henceforth the Major substituted a plunge in the sea for his morning tub. Mr. Lescombe was a most generous type of host. Nothing was left undone that could add to the happiness of his visitor, and that without the slightest thought of selfishness. But, somehow, Gertrude Lescombe formed the chief element in that exceeding happiness. She steered when he put the boat out to sea; she rode out with him, or took him out in her basket-carriage to see the chief points of interest in the neighbourhood. She took him out to St. Julian's Point, that he might sketch the old ruins, and the white cliffs, and the great and wide sea beyond, and the contorted rocks which rose out of the depths not far from shore. As for business, he left it to his man of business, Mr. Parker, and to the gentleman, whoever he might be, who was the Mr. Parker on the other side of the question.

O, why couldn't things go on in the pleasant way in which they were going on? Why should the ugly business element be always obtruding itself in the midst of pleasant things?

One day they were sitting over their wine—sitting down over port and claret, which the old stockjobber had had down half a century before. As a rule, we moderns do not approve of port; but port of a vintage year, and which has been matured for many years afterwards, is never to be refused when it can be obtained. But it must be a sound wine to commence with. No amount of keeping will perfect a wine which was not a good wine at starting.

The Major was holding his glass to the light, and enjoying the rich ruby tint.

'Do you think you will like the place, Major?'

'I do indeed, more especially as I find that there will be a good deal of land in the market soon, and Mr. Parker sends me word that he has secured the refusal of it.'

'My man, Mr. Mordaunt, will give your man, Mr. Parker, all the deeds and particulars.'

'I have told Mr. Parker that I shall be perfectly content with any proposals that Mr. Mordaunt makes.' It will be seen that our Major was not a hard man of business to deal with.

'I assure you, my dear fellow, I shall give up the place to you with greater pleasure than to any other living man. You are the right man in the right place. Your people were here, and it seems only right that you should come back to it again.'

And it certainly was a case of more poetical justice than one often finds in the world. Old Lescombe bought the estate with his City money, and here comes

a descendant of the old stock who buys it back.

Mr. Lescombe wanted to sell his estate. Land sells well, and hardly produces two per cent to the buyer. He wanted the money, which would be some forty thousand pounds, which would pay off all his liabilities, and leave him the money that would suffice for watering-place existence. But it did seem hard lines to him that he must give up the old place. He had taken to the country as thoroughly as his father before him had been unable to do so. He now remembered that among the conditions of sale there was a sentence respecting 'immediate possession.' The immediate possession was all very well on the side of receiving immediate payment, but it was not so well on the side of immediately turning out.

But it must be done, thought the Squire remorsefully. It was now becoming high time that he should look out for a new residence in Bath or Cheltenham. He must put things in order, gather up his scattered sheaves. He must begin at once, and first of all with his own private chattels and belongings. It was a piteous sight to see the old man in his den, bringing together fishing-rods and lines, books and papers, disturbing things which all his life long had never been disturbed. He found, when the time now came that he should be transplanted, how deeply his whole being had taken root in the soil. He was soon tired and bewildered, leaning his face on his hands and moaning.

Just then Gertrude entered the room.

'Papa dear,' she said, feeling uneasy, and moving quickly towards him, 'what is the matter? Tell me.'

'There is nothing the matter, dear; only I am rather put out this morning. It makes me sorry to leave the old place.'

'Sorry! I should think so, indeed. I begin to hate that Major Eveleigh. The notion of his turning us out of doors!'

Ah, Gertrude, Gertrude, is this statement strictly veracious and historic? After all those walks and rambles, is there only a feeling of hatred implanted in your celestial breast?

'It is no fault of his, my dear,' said the old man. 'He only comes because I want to go. And he comes in a much more pleasant and liberal way than many would come.'

'But it is so hard that we should have to go, owing to those shocking banks and railways.'

'You will enjoy the change to Bath or Cheltenham, my dear. Plenty of society, promenades, balls, concerts.'

'Some girls might enjoy it, papa, but not I; at least not for more than a week or two. I think Lescombe the most beautiful spot in the whole world; the sea, the combes, the moor, the mountains, the woods.'

'I know it, my dear. I know it as well as you do. But, Gertrude, you are not a child. You know all my affairs as well as I know them myself. Let us be grateful that this sale will enable us to leave the place with honour, and live pleasantly in a pleasant place.'

On several occasions he afterwards descanted on the glories of Bath and Cheltenham. But though Gertrude tried to appear delighted with his description, she retained her private conviction that Lescombe was the centre of the universe.

One day she had been sitting on a mossy stone beneath an ancient arch of the ruins of St. Ju-

A SURPRISE.

See THE RECOVERED ESTATE, page 199.

lien's Chapel. 'To her,' as they say in the playbooks, came the gallant Major, portfolio in hand, to complete some sketches of the ruins and of the scenery about them. However hateful he might be as the early proprietor of Lescombe, still the monster drew so well that he was quite capable of giving Gertrude Lescombe a few useful hints. They both worked together for half an hour.

'Well, this is a beautiful place,' said the Major, really with a keen love of fine scenery. But the words grated unpleasingly on Gertrude's ear, as if they conveyed a thorough appreciation of newly-acquired property.

'Dear old Lescombe!' said the girl, and the fair lips began to quiver and the eyelashes were wet.

The Major did not observe these signs of emotion, and proceeded,

'I shall not make any alteration. The place is simply perfect. I shall leave everything exactly as it is. I really cannot make out why the Squire should want to give up the place. He cannot be so well off anywhere else.'

Looking at his companion's face the Major saw that she was moved with deep emotion. She turned her face away and raised her hand to screen herself from observation.

'Miss Lescombe, Gertrude,' he exclaimed, 'what on earth is the matter? It is impossible that I can have said anything to give you pain. I would rather cut off my right hand than do so.'

'It is not your fault, I know very well, Major Eveleigh; but we are so very, very sorry to leave the old place. Why do we leave it? You don't suppose we should leave it unless we were obliged to leave.'

'Obliged!' echoed the Major, with a genuine look of amazement. 'I had really never thought of the matter in that point of view.'

Neither had he. His own impression had been, as he afterwards had an opportunity for explaining, that the Squire, having no son, did not care to keep such a big place in hand, and thought of retiring to some fashionable locality. Unfortunately in these days it is no new thing for people to give up country estates and retire into fashionable centres.

'Now, Gertrude, dear Gertrude, listen to me,' said the Major, placing his hand on her arm in a beseeching mood. 'You may be quite sure that I do not want you to leave Lescombe. Ever since I have known you I have had the ambition to make you in real truth the mistress of Lescombe, and the place would lose all its charms if you would not stay here as my wife.'

And now Gertrude was trembling as well as crying.

'And as for the dear old man, I shall be delighted if he will stay here altogether, exactly as he used to do. We will be as happy as we have been during the last few weeks.'

And the happy girl was obliged to confess that if she loved Lescombe and her father, she also truly loved Frank Eveleigh.

I do not exactly know what were the settlements and the business arrangements. They were in the safe hands of Mr. Parker and the gentleman on the other side. As the Major lucidly explained the matter, any money he put into the estate would eventually come back to him. It was only taking money out of one waistcoat-pocket and putting it into the other. Hardy was the 'best man' on the occasion of the marriage. Gertrude finds that, much as she loves Lescombe, a

run on the Continent and a season in town are endurable. The Squire continues the virtual lord of Lescombe. The Eveleighs have two sons; and one of them, christened Lescombe, is to assume the name and arms of his grandfather; so that there is every probability that there will yet be another Lescombe Lescombe of Lescombe.

RIVER RHYMES.

No. II. A BANK BALLAD.

At the Red Lion, or the 'Lion' as it is more familiarly called, Shenstone scratched upon a window-pane the lines:

> 'Whoe'er has travell'd life's dull round,
> Where'er his stages may have been,
> May sigh to think that he has found
> His warmest welcome at an inn!'

I.

'Tis joyful to run from the turmoil of town,
To flee from its worry and bustle;
To put on your flannels and get your hands brown,
Is good for the mind and the muscle.
When Goodwood is done and the season is gone,
'Tis pleasant the river to ply on,
Thrice pleasant to lounge on the velvety lawn
At the 'Lion'!

II.

'Tis a finely toned, picturesque, sunshiny place,
Recalling a dozen old stories;
With a rare British, good-natured, ruddy-bricked face,
Suggesting old wines and old Tories:
Ah, many's the magnum of rare crusted port,
Of vintage no one could cry fie on,
Has been drunk by good men of the old-fashioned sort
At the 'Lion'!

III.

O, sweet is the exquisite lime-scented breeze
Awaft o'er the Remenham reaches!
What lullaby lurks in the music of trees,
The concert of poplars and beeches!
Shall I go for a row, or lounge in a punt,
The stream—half asleep—throw a fly on?
Or watch pretty girls feed the cygnets in front
Of the 'Lion'?

IV.

I see drifting by such a sweet little crew,
Bedight in most delicate colours,
In ivory-white and forget-me-not blue—
A couple of pretty girl-scullers.
A pouting young puss, in the shortest of frocks—
A nice little nautical scion—
The good ship she steers, like a clever young 'cox.,'
Past the 'Lion.'

V.

I lazily muse and I smoke cigarettes,
While rhymes I together am stringing;
I listen and nod to the dreamy duets
The girls on the first-floor are singing.
The sunshine is hot and the summer-breeze sighs,
There's scarcely a cloudlet the sky on;
O, were it but cooler, how I'd moralise
At the 'Lion'!

VI.

But who can be thoughtful or lecture or preach,
While Harry is flirting with Bella,
And Rosie's red lips pouting over a peach,
'Neath shade of a snowy umbrella?
The Infant is drifting down in her canoe,
The Rector his cob canters by on;
The church-clock is chiming a quarter-past two,
Near the 'Lion.'

VII.

Shall I drop off to sleep, or moon here all day,
And drowsily finish my ballad?
No; 'Luncheon is ready,' I hear some one say;
'A lobster, a chicken, a salad:'
A cool silver cup of the beadiest ale,
The white table-cloth I descry on—
So clearly 'tis time I concluded my tale
Of the 'Lion'!

J. ASHBY-STERRY.

Henley-on-Thames, August.

CHAPTER XXV.

TWO AMONG THE RUINS.

We awoke the next morning to find the world in that state of arrant demoralisation which usually follows upon private theatricals; a state of pitiable reaction, of inane indifference to hours, clocks, and bells, hosts and dramatic company alike overcome by the limp, helpless languor of exhausted vital powers.

Most of Mrs. Meredith's guests left the castle in the morning, thus reducing our circle nearly to what it had been during the previous week, with the addition of the Gerards. But the healthy element of art and work—that had hitherto acted among us like a good leaven, kept the artists, artists, and elevated the amateurs—now that the opera was a thing of the past, we had lost, and there remained merely a party of ladies and gentlemen, some plain, some good-looking, some clever, some the reverse; but with no better outlet for their energies than flirting, idling, loitering about, nor a pretence of a common purpose for a bond of union between them.

Tired out by the long strain and varied excitements of the day before, I did not appear downstairs till late in the afternoon. Then becoming impatient of solitude and repose, I betook myself to the billiard-room. There I found Hilda by herself, communing with the worsted-work cushions on the ottoman by the window.

'What, alone?' I uttered, in surprise. 'Where is everybody?'

'Some of the gentlemen have gone up the river fishing. Mrs. Meredith has just ordered out all her friends into the garden to admire the view from the terrace. I did not care to join so mixed a regiment, and excused myself; so here I am.'

I commenced an aimless game with the billiard cue and balls, glad of this *tête-à-tête*. I wanted to sift this friend of my childhood, rival of my maidenhood, neither friend nor rival now.

Her beauty had not diminished, but developed in the eighteen months that had passed since we met. It must surely now, thought I, be in its prime, as a perfect type of feminine loveliness uninformed by a beautiful soul. Her manner had undergone a change, and become less free and demonstrative than in her girlish days.

'What do you think of Adlerberg,' I began presently, 'now that you've seen it by night and by day?'

'I am quite delighted with the castle. I was prepared for a dreary introduction to German discomforts, and am agreeably surprised to find at least a few traces of civilisation.'

'And Mrs. Meredith,' I continued, 'is not she a most charming *châtelaine*?'

'O, no, pray stop there,' said Hilda, with a laugh. 'Mrs. Meredith may captivate you, or, by dint of patience and perseverance, young opera singers, gray-headed composers, and the extraordinary set of people she likes, it seems, to have hanging

about her. But for my part, I can only feel what a pity it is that Leopold did not marry some one who at least *looked* like a lady.

'That isn't fair. I grant that Sophie, to show to advantage, must not be seen from too close a point of view.' (Beside Hilda she was like one of the nondescript ladies fair painted on a drop-scene, as compared with one of Millais' nineteenth-century beauties.) 'But she is always pleasing and lively and thoroughly amiable, which is something.'

'And rich, which is everything. O, it was the most natural thing in the world that Leo should fall in love with Castle Adlerberg; "*An Golde hängt, nach Golde drängt*," &c., you know.'

'That is, to say the least, a strange lament to hear in the lips of Hilda Gerard, *née* Jarvis,' I observed, laughing outright.

'I only mean that this is another example of how money acts as a sufficient attraction, others wanting.'

'Tell me, then,' said I coolly, 'how do you find it repay you?'

'I?'

'Yes. Mr. Gerard is rich, is he not? Come, you said so yourself, you recollect—"a really good *parti*," &c.'

'O, Jasper has money, of course; though he does not make use of it by any means as I should wish. Still, there are my settlements, and so on. I have nothing to complain of in that respect.'

'So you are happy, just as you expected you would be?' I said inquiringly, still taking shots industriously, but at random.

Hilda, for all reply, rose and turned away from me towards the window. Her eyes went roving carelessly over the lawn, which was scattered with the figures of the rest of the party.

Mr. Meredith, who was among them, presently sauntered up, pulled open the billiard-room window from outside, and stepped in. Hilda and he instantly struck up a conversation, one of those it would be lost labour to try and transcribe. Their talk was of the weather and the view, of German country houses and furniture as compared with British. But just as the most ineffable-*looking têtes-à-tête* is often quite prosy, humdrum, and unmeaning, if we only knew, so what on the face of it would seem the most empty, conventional, frosty dialogue in the world often veils—in this example but half veiled—something significant enough,—a latent earnest, written, as it were, in cipher or sympathetic ink, between the words as spoken aloud.

In a few minutes, impatient of playing third—propriety, it might be, or intruder—I threw down my cue and stepped out on to the lawn. As I did so, Theodore, separating himself from a little group under the trees, came to meet me with a victorious expression.

'At last,' he said gravely. 'Miss Noel, do you believe in mesmerism?'

'Now what can you mean?' I asked.

'Only that for the last ten minutes I have been trying to see if I could force you out into the garden by willing it as strongly as ever I could. Just as my patience was coming to an end I conquer, you see.'

I laughed at him, but he was firmly convinced of his occult power.

'You are to come for a walk now,' said he. 'Say that you will.'

'Of course you have only to *will*, and there's no help, for I must,' said I, rallying.

'Don't laugh at me,' he entreated, 'but come. It is the last favour I shall ask of you. To-morrow I'm going away, you know.'

'I am tired,' said I, still hanging back.

'Just a little way, as far as the ruins to see the sunset. Have you ever seen the sunset from the Swallow's Nest?'

'Never.'

'Then you must come at once. Everybody who stays at Castle Adlerberg is bound to see the sunset from the Swallow's Nest. The others are all going.'

I yielded. It was Theodore's way to take people thus by storm, and it generally succeeded. Together we strolled through the wood, he chattering nonsense, I listening amiably. Quite enough, this, for the rest of the party, following and regarding us with significant glances and smiles, to hang a complete romance upon. People are always ready to look upon the course of other folks' love journeys as straight and obvious, however much personal experience may have taught them of the zigzags and pitfalls that beset those ways.

'Yes; I leave Castle Adlerberg to-morrow,' repeated Theodore gloomily. 'My engagements begin again almost directly, and I have to join the opera company at Mannheim. That is the worst of a profession like mine. One is a slave in chains.'

'Chains of flowers and gold.'

'Ah, they may seem so to you from a distance; but if once they were your own—'

'I should feel the same,' I persisted obstinately. 'I love music and I love acting; so opera, as the combination of the two, has more than a double charm for me.'

'Ah, but the life, the life!' muttered Theodore.

'Think what lives are,' said I philosophically. 'Taking it, even the mere routine, for all in all, it is, or might be, brighter than most.'

We had strayed away from the rest of the walking party into a narrow winding foot-path, that proved to be a short cut, and soon brought us to the ruins. The sun, veiled by transparent clouds it burnished with gold, was just sinking, and the sky on every side was suffused with saffron and crimson hues.

'The finest view is from the top of that little turret,' said Theodore; and we scrambled up a crumbling flight of steps to the vantage-ground afforded by a ruined keep. There stood an old stone sarcophagus upside down, which served as a bench. The spot, which had been christened 'Sophie's Repose,' commanded, indeed, a superb vista of both sides of the river, the woods behind the ruin, and the steep hillside below slanting down to the water's brink, where stood a rough boat-house and a little craft was moored, while on the opposite bank two or three figures were to be seen fishing.

I sat on the sarcophagus, listening to the monotonous Gregorian chant of the wood-pigeons in the trees, and Theodore lay at my feet looking up at me.

'Sing something,' said I, at random; and he instantly began very softly and distinctly, with half-serious, half-travestied earnest,

'Enfant, si j'étais roi, je donnerais l'empire,
Et mon char, et mon sceptre, et mon peuple à genoux,
Et ma couronne d'or, et mes bains de porphyre,
Et mes flottes, à qui la mer ne peut suffire,
Pour un regard de vous!'

Impossible not to look down on him with a smile. His face, as it were, reflected it instantly; a

bright confident expression overspread his features.

'That life,' he said, brusquely reverting to our former conversation, 'which you are so certain you don't despise, you would still never like well enough to choose for your own.'

'A new and brilliant idea for me, at least,' said I gaily; 'leave private life, study for the stage or concert-room, and become Mademoiselle something.'

'But you might, you know,' he exclaimed, with sudden eagerness. 'Here in Germany, for instance, where quality is everything, and they ridicule the monster halls and theatres the English are so senselessly fond of, there is a field for real art of all kinds, and musical excellence like yours would be ranked high, as it deserves. Ask Von Zbirow, if you won't believe me. I know what he thinks of your voice and your talent.'

I let him go on, it amused me.

'And you would never repent,' he continued. 'Forget what I said of the life just now; I was out of humour with it, as I often am; but in the main you were quite right. I think there is no other at the same time so free and yet with so steady an aim. Then I like a profession in which excitement helps one to do one's daily work well, instead of unfitting one for it. And if only there were a few more like yourself in our calling, I think it might beat all others out of the field—in enchantment.'

'Surely, surely,' said I laughingly, 'there are enchantresses enough in it.'

He shrugged his shoulders significantly.

'Such as Fräulein Müller,' I added.

'Fräulein Müller?' he repeated unconcernedly, rather as if he had never heard the name before.

'Yes; Elsa. Where is she now?'

'Upon my word I do not know. Elsa? Why, I suppose she is with her aunt. What makes you ask?' and he looked up wonderingly.

I said nothing.

'What?' he exclaimed, with a rapid change of countenance—I saw he thought I was jealous. 'Did you, could you imagine that I seriously cared for that little—'

'O, I imagined nothing. I thought, I remembered—'

'Don't talk of her,' said he, almost impatiently; 'she is nothing to me. I cannot think of her nor of any living being but you. Perdita'—urgently—'could you ever consent to share an actor's life?'

I was going to speak, but he stopped me, continuing with vehemence,

'Don't silence me yet. Last night we played out a story, you and I. Let us begin it again at the beginning. We are in the castle. You are Perdita, and Rafael is, as in the play, at your feet. But then we are not counts and countesses, nor have we got to work out a tragedy. Say instead that Perdita and Rafael join hearts and destinies, and live out a long bright future in the service of art together!'

Yes, at that moment I was tempted. I knew the feeling would not last; knew the picture drawn by Theodore was a *féerie*, a baseless vision impossible to realise; knew that I could neither begin for myself the existence he had sketched, nor love him enough to accept his as my own, to share and complement it. It was simply a sudden wild longing to forget in change and intoxication—in self-delusion, if nothing else would do—all that had gone before, which threatened to prevail at that moment. I might

almost have yielded to the spell youth and vehemence can exercise, responded to the pressure of Theodore's hand, and let those indefatigable wood-pigeons and the river's murmur and my silence give the answer his glowing face and eager eye were demanding. Already he was interpreting everything according to his desire. He smiled, saying beseechingly in a half-whisper, '*Du Herzallerliebste mein!*' which is, being interpreted, 'My best beloved!'

Sweet words, but not fresh on his lips. Had not I myself heard them murmured over the sleeping figure of Elsa in the garden? A cold inward light—like the sober gray dawn breaking over the glare and splendour of a pageant, and making that ghastly which delighted the eye a moment ago—put an end to that waking dream, and recalled me to my sober senses. All the old bitterness and mutiny of heart was there again.

'Theodore,' I exclaimed drearily, 'Perdita died last night, and you will not find her again. It was best in the play. I can never be yours—never. And you would not find in me what you seek.'

'What is that?'

'The soulless woman,' thought I, as I looked at him; but I answered, 'The love and devotion of a wife. We have been good friends, and fellow-worshippers in music and art. Do not let us end in estrangement now by talking of what can never be between us, by talking of love and marriage.'

'Are you in earnest?' said he.

'Am I not?' I cried. In desolating earnest. For 'O, that I *could* have cared for him!' was my uppermost thought, even then, even now that his short-lived reign was over.

'Von Zbirow was right,' he muttered, after a while, sullenly.

'What do you mean?'

'I mean that he forced my secret from me. Last night I told him all, and he warned me—said he knew you would never care—that you had no love, not ever so little, left to give.'

I felt myself changing colour, and was dumb. The minutes dragged on heavily. Neither of us stirred or spoke. Presently we heard the voices of Mrs. Meredith and her party among the ruins below. I implored Theodore to leave me and join them, and he gloomily obeyed.

For a while I heard them still exploring the Swallow's Nest. But before long they all went off again into the woods, their steps and voices died away in the distance, and I was alone at last.

I lay down upon the grass among weeds and ivy, regardless of crickets, caterpillars, and creeping things innumerable, shut my eyes, and laughed aloud.

Utterly, utterly had Theodore deceived himself in supposing for a moment that he could win from me love worth the name. My fault, perhaps, if he had been misled into the supposition. But not for the life of me could I feel one pang of penitence just then. He took me for a flirt, no doubt, yet there again he was mistaken. Von Zbirow knew better. It was a kind of recoil I could not help. I had proof enough of that already. But a cold glance over the past, a moment's calm scrutiny of self, showed me a picture it was not pleasant to contemplate. How much love I had had offered me! Love worth delighting in, golden love in the hands that tendered it, but which, like fairy gold, seemed to turn to dust and dry leaves at the touch of my hand stretched out to receive it. Neither for Von Zbirow, with all his genius, for Albert Grey, with all his ver-

satility and wit, nor yet for the young hero of romance who had just left me, could I summon up an extra beat to my pulse, flush to my face, sparkle to my eye, or tremor to my voice.

It was Jasper's image that had entered once into my heart, hardened there, as it seemed, into marble, forbidding the right of way henceforth to any other.

I looked at the image, now he and I had met once more, and asked myself again, as of old, why I had preferred, and ever should prefer, him to the world of men. What was he that he must dwarf and kill them in my eyes thus? '*Il était mieux homme que les autres.*'

Difficult to class, because not an official representative of any special hero type, such as the soldier, or poet, or philosopher, or statesman hero; still with a salient, masculine character, which, for significance and worth, might have held its own in any time or place, whether he trod the earth now, or in the turbulent iron Middle Ages, or in some classic era of great men, the golden days of Greece and Rome. There was a superior man in him—like some rare old masterpiece of painting, partly concealed, darkened, though uninjured, and discernible beneath a little cloud of the world's dust. So Hilda will keep it clouded for ever, and lose no pains to mar it still more effectually by modern worthless repainting and varnish.

My reverie ended there. Wearied with thought, I fell, not asleep, but into a strange semi-conscious state, as if my soul, turned drowsy or faint, had taken leave of me a while. I had nothing left but my senses five; no more intellect at command than a bird or a fawn untroubled by the subtleties of speculation. Reason, reflection, memory, judgment—what an arch relief to put them off for a while like an irksome robe! And I reclined on the moss, mechanically watching the lizards darting through the crevices of the honeycombed walls, the brilliant beetles in the grass, the twilight moths flitting by, hovering, settling on me, I lay so still, listening to the 'bees in the bells of thyme;' staring down at that naked, eyeless, hollow ruin, weird beyond description now at this haunted hour, the borderland between day and night.

Not a peasant, Sophie had assured me, would venture inside those ruins after dark. Sophie herself would have bargained for a companion; Eva also, I suspect; myself, perhaps, at any other season.

I was physically by no means above the qualms of nervous superstition, nor insensible to the influence of dusky lights, creeping shadows, and inexplicable noises. But such impressions had at that moment no power to scare me. Let the black turrets awake by all means. Let the whole army of historical spectres come forth from the old fortress, Roman knights in full armour, Gothic maidens in bridal array. Free leave to the bats and owlets and death's-head moths to flutter round me. Let the mountain oreads, river sylphs, and gnomes of the rocks arise with one accord. They shall all be heartily welcome, if only as messengers from another world, whose existence alone can solve the mystery of this.

As if in reply to my unuttered invocation, a tall figure showed itself suddenly in the ruined doorway opposite me. For a moment I could not make out in the fading light whether it were Jasper or only my brain's play. I inclined to the latter, until he accosted me aloud—'Good-even-

ing'—with some surprise in his expression.

'O, then it is you, is it?' I responded, in a tone of marked disappointment.

'Ah, you took me for—'

'For a ghost—exactly,' said I, interrupting him promptly. 'These ruins are haunted, I have heard, and I had set my heart on a glimpse of something supernatural, at least.'

He mounted the steps to the top of the keep, where I had resumed my position on the sarcophagus.

'Are you going to bivouac out here?' he asked presently; 'it is rather late, you know.'

'Yes, but we do not dine to-night. There is to be supper at nine, and it is not eight yet.'

'Where is Theodore Marston? have you spirited him away?'

'Theodore?' I repeated, with a little irritation; 'I am not his keeper.'

'He was up here with you for a long time.'

'Are you a spy?' said I quickly.

'No. Did you not see me with Von Zbirow and one or two more on the river? I saw you both. I can always recognise him at any distance, by the absurd Tyrolese hat and feather he persists in wearing. You had both disappeared—I imagined you had gone home.'

'Forgive me,' he resumed by and by, as I remained silent, 'but am I to congratulate you?'

'I do forgive you, for I perceive that you have not been watching very closely, or you would have seen me send him away to join Mrs. Meredith and her friends.'

'Then, with or without leave, I shall congratulate you,' he said gravely. 'Theodore—well, he's a good fellow, which does not, however, prevent him from being most unworthy of you in every way.'

'Really!' said I ironically. 'Do you mean because of the profession he has adopted? So far from lowering him in my eyes, that step of his I heartily sympathise with. Most people do approve it, now that it has been justified by success.'

'I only meant,' he returned, 'that, if you had consented to link your fate with his, you would see the rest of your life forcibly frittered away in petty theatrical intrigues. Besides, Theodore, with all his talent, remains, and always will remain, a feather-brained boy, reckless and mercurial; your inferior in every respect.'

'I deny that. See how he has made his way by these talents in the teeth of every kind of opposition. There is a brilliant time coming for him now. He is constant to his art, and whatever his volatility of temper he will never swerve there. He can be true to something at least; I honour and admire him for that.'

'I am wrong, then,' he exclaimed, forgetting himself slightly; 'you have not dismissed him. Why should you, if he can command such sentiments from you as those?'

I made no reply at first. My eyes were turned away from him, fixed upon the western sky, where the saffron glow had quite faded now. He was not looking at me either, as he stood leaning back against the crenelated parapet.

'No, pardon me,' he resumed directly; 'that was a question I had, perhaps, no right to ask.'

True, but he could not unask it, and I meant to answer it presently. Silence might have given a false reply.

'Certainly,' I observed, with a half laugh, 'I might fairly ask what possible concern it can ever be of yours whom I love or whom I marry. But I will tell you

something, all the same. I have my own ideas on the subject of marriage, and must hold to them, though I may be quite alone in my creed.'

'What, then, I wonder, do you take to be the truth about it?' he asked.

'"I take it as those that deny purgatory.
It locally contains or heaven or hell.
There's no third place in it,"'

I returned slowly, in the words of Webster's hero, 'and until I have —outgrown—that conviction, I could never marry Theodore Marston, which is well, I think, for his sake and my own.'

I spoke the words simply and openly, careless of whether they might strike home. It was idle to make as if we had never exchanged thoughts and ideas before. It seemed painfully natural to me to do so now.

Jasper was silent. But well I knew that in his heart he gave me reason. Better out and out to lose your heart's desire, keeping your faith in it, and to live without it, free to spend and bestow yourself as you please, than win it to find its promise fail miserably, and yourself hand in hand for ever with what you most readily swore to love and cherish and honour, and what now, for the life of you, you cannot but cordially despise. I needed no voice from above to tell me that Jasper's bride, with all her charms, had not brought him nearer heaven.

When we spoke again it was of indifferent things—of the river, the ruins, and the legends still clinging to the Swallow's Nest. We heard the voices of the fishing party slowly ascending the hill, waited until they joined us, and all returned to the castle together.

CHAPTER XXVI.

FLOWER OF LOVE-IN-IDLENESS.

One morning, about a week later, Eva came to me before breakfast with the peculiar and unmistakable expression in her face of a very amiable person who, from conscientious motives, has made up her mind and braced up her nerves to say a very disagreeable thing. I knew at once what was pending.

'Maisie,' she began, in a firm tone, that by itself seemed to forestall opposition and ridicule, 'I want you to listen to me, and, just for once, to take my advice.'

'Well, say on,' I replied carelessly.

'Don't let us prolong our visit here one day more than we can help, but leave Castle Adlerberg as soon as ever we can make our arrangements.'

Startling though the proposition sounded it was the very speech I had expected.

'But why?' said I, as I went on arranging my hair before the glass; 'must we actually pack up and pack off so soon, with so little warning?'

'Not a day too soon, depend upon it,' she returned emphatically.

'Only say why,' I urged impatiently. 'Sophie is not tired of us yet, surely? I think she wants us to stay on. I vow I'm in no hurry to get back to England. One place is as good as another for me; and as for you, can you deny that the country air has improved your colour and appetite wonderfully? Besides, I want you, before we go, to make some sketches for that joint work we mean to bring out when we get home, *Unprotected Females in Franconia.* I expect it will consist chiefly of illustrations.'

'Maisie, be quiet—be serious.

You know it is because of you that I wish we were away; that I wish to heaven we had never come.'

Her accent, which told of a depth of passionate, unselfish anxiety, thrilled me through and through. But the very poignancy of the feeling that assailed me drove me to ward it off with levity as long as I could.

'Of me? Explain, if you please. What bird of ill omen have you seen now?'

'Dear,' she said earnestly, 'do you know yourself? I am older than you, and have learnt to know and fear the tricks one's own character may play one. Are you right, are you wise, to stay?'

'Speak out, do,' said I; 'no occasion to spare my feelings, believe me.'

'Well, if you make me—' She stopped, and then resumed, with difficulty and a painful effort, 'If Mr. and Mrs. Gerard were happy, it would be a different thing. The sight of their happiness might break your heart, perhaps, but I do believe you would rather die than that a thought of you should come between them and disturb it. But—'

'But they are not happy, are they?' I broke in, with vehemence and exultation. 'Whatever happiness they look forward to now, they must compass independently of, nay, in spite of, each other. How well I knew they had built up their "house of life" on the sand—or the slime! Of course it must fall, and great should be the fall of it. It would be a lie if I said I was not glad. God knows it is a sufficiently sorry and wretched kind of triumph or satisfaction; but it *is* a satisfaction. Don't look so shocked, Eva.'

'But I *am* shocked,' she returned, bewildered and half frightened by my impetuosity.

'Can you not understand that, knowing what I know of Hilda's contemptible character, if I had seen Jasper Gerard satisfied with contemptibility—he whose nature was cast in another metal—well, if once I thought gold could mate with clay and live happy ever after, I should have felt as if the ground were giving way under my feet? Every genuine opinion, inclination, preference she has, everything real in her, must, when it asserts itself, clash with his more generous instinct and higher taste. Of course he shuts his eyes to this whilst he can. He did love her devoutly, and it can't be a pleasant discovery to make that what he held so dear was a heavenly sham, corrupt and worthless at the core. But in his secret soul he fears—feels it already. The smash must come, some time.'

'Then can you wonder,' said Eva mildly, but significantly, 'if I say that you—that we had best leave here at once, and not stay to see it?'

I shook my head with obstinacy.

'Don't misunderstand me. All the while I look upon Jasper Gerard as one might upon the statue of a dead friend. I can criticise it coldly and unsparingly, discern the flaws in the marble and the very indifferent likeness it bears to the original, which I still keep, if only for comparison's sake, in my fancy.'

'And is this all, really all, you can feel for him now?' she persisted.

'No,' said I reluctantly; 'there is a root of bitterness besides, an unforgiving sense—a sinister something, much more like hate than love.'

'But he, Maisie. What if, as I think, he is first learning to know you now? What if, just as he is waking up to a sense of the

almost impassable distance between his wife's mind and his, now that he is thrown with you again, and begins to realise what might have been, he—'

'That's his affair,' I interrupted quickly. 'Is he to have the monopoly of calm, and I of contest? Granting that he *has* reversed his old judgment between Hilda and me, am I bound to care? Any link of amenity there should be between him and myself, as two human beings not enemies born, he has broken. He might have left me alone at the first.'

Eva was silenced, though clearly unconvinced, and loth to abandon the assault.

'Maisie,' she began, suddenly stopping me as we were just leaving the room to go down.

'Well!' said I harshly, expecting a final charge.

'Did Mr. Meredith know the Jarvises well before Hilda's marriage?'

'O, pretty well, I believe. Why do you ask?'

'Because—well, you will now have a perfect right to be shocked with me for my evil-speaking, but she does appear to me to "carry on" with him, as they say, most disgracefully, whenever Sophie and Jasper are out of the way. And as for Mr. Meredith himself, I cannot make him out; but for all his rough, downright way of speaking, and small care for appearances, he is not a man I could ever trust.'

I burst out laughing.

'Have you been here so long and only just found that out, Eva? Sowing the wind, reaping the whirlwind, my dear; and now we are in full harvest.'

Certainly the last ten days had seen strange new lights and shadows come over Castle Adlerberg.

From the innccent, homely, simple routine with which our visit there had begun, we seemed to have strayed far indeed, and to be living among the pages of one of Balzac's novels. There is often, did we know it, but a single move between moral apple-pie order and entire anarchy.

Chance had made this move for some of us, by suddenly bringing such and such atoms together. A set of human beings—four of them with certain relations in the past—at a particular crisis are met in one place, isolated there, and lo, the ground is everywhere undermined. Given such a combination and such conditions, and the thing is possible—scarcely otherwise, in such a little while. One short week of idle *villeggiatura*, mornings on the river or in the woods, impromptu afternoon excursions and sketching parties, and musical evenings (Von Zbirow still stayed on), and, however few and slight may be the outward and visible signs thereof, five lives were at stake—Hilda's, Jasper's, Leopold Meredith's, Sophie's, and mine. A single moving force ruling the gaming-table.

Love merely colours our life, it has been said, and the saying applauded. Number and scan the lives you know, and then declare if love has not affected the substance and shape of most of them as well. Its birth had passed like something more than colouring into my youth, and its enforced decay was embittering Jasper's manhood.

I could study him coldly now. We met on altered ground, and each saw the other in a new light. The old sense of insignificance and timidity that had haunted me in his presence was gone. Yes, it was decreed that he should know me now—late, worse for me than never, very likely—but

to this truth I resolutely refused to give a thought, as I stood by and watched him under the inroads of growing contempt for the woman he had best loved. That ordeal—the first shock of sudden disenchantment, the after-torture of slow awakening, till the strong love that had become part of self, having put us through every ingenious variety of pain, falls off, leaving us maimed and spiritless—is the severest test that flesh and blood, soul and spirit, can undergo. Let those testify that have cried 'Hyperion' and found a satyr. No character so fine but it may be warped or corroded by that excessive trial. Would Jasper's escape?

And Hilda. She had all her life been content to rank love as mere colouring, treat it accordingly, throw it aside—pink, blue, or yellow, what matters? How had her golden rule answered her? Not well.

Up to now, I think, she had been fairly content. If she found her husband rather less tractable, less convertible to her views of life than she had chosen to anticipate, and that continued repression of her inner self, which instinct told her was necessary if she wished to retain her old power over him, decidedly irksome, still in all other respects she had almost realised the perfection of a *mariage de raison*, and that he *was* her humble servant still, she felt pretty confident. He must be. Her glass told her that she was just as beautiful as ever; her reason that it is only those stupid women who have no idea how to exercise their charms of whom men tire; and in all that concerned such influence she felt herself one of the cleverest of women.

The danger to her came from another quarter: not from the decline of a baseless, fated love, but from the resuscitation within her of one that was real enough, into whose hands she was blindly playing, led on by her ruling passion—vanity. This, in her, had been fostered into the strength of a mania by infinite self-indulgence. That incessant, insatiable craving had become part of her nature, and she could not suspend or get rid of it suddenly at the call of a moral obligation, and merely because she had entered upon married life. More than ever, now that open serious court was denied her, must she still try and make petty slaves of the men she met; and with regard to Meredith in particular, she longed to convince herself that, although he had married 'that woman,' as she always called poor Sophie to me, Mrs. Gerard was still the queen of his fancy. Once possessed of this gratifying assurance, she would, or thought she would, hold there.

Mr. Meredith must teach her to play billiards; Mr. Meredith must give her a mount. German women did not ride—the more foolish they. She would show them how. Then in the evenings, when Von Zbirow, like a magnet, drew most of us round the piano, to listen to his playing and importune him to go on, and Mrs. Gerard, who hated music, yawned apart and looked politely victimised, the master of the house, who perfectly agreed with her, seemed bound in courtesy to do something to entertain her, and they two would keep up a running conversation in properly subdued tones at the farther end of the room whilst the music lasted. From their first meeting the effect of her coquetry on Meredith had been instantaneous. He of all men, perhaps, understood Hilda best; but she knew not herself nor him.

I observed how that cool Penelope-like self-possession, that ena-

bled her so adroitly to vivisect and play upon the unruly wills and affections of men in general, would show signs of deserting her in this one's presence. Now any feeling approaching to self-submission was so rare and strange to her that she was very likely to be at its mercy should it ever come and take her by surprise. What if Leopold now dominated her, instead of undergoing her dominion?

She seemed to feel this self-distrust, this fear, and made more than one effort to draw back. For, though truth and honesty were mere words to her, appearances, proprieties, and wifely dignity had still a certain real value in her eyes.

Unfortunately Leopold Meredith, all his life long, had cared remarkably little about proprieties, and was not the man to consider his own personal dignity as at stake in their flirtation. It was the dash of brutality in his nature that made it more than a match for Hilda's. He had the full courage of his caprices—that is to say, a cruelly selfish audacity, a deliberate recklessness well calculated to disconcert my fine lady, and tread down her plans and precautions.

To me all this, seen by the light of a previous knowledge, seemed alarmingly legible. Eva and others, who had not the key, only saw and were troubled by a dim handwriting on the wall they could not read or interpret.

That morning Sophie had planned a boating-excursion up the river for her guests. This arrangement enabled her husband, who, as Mr. Gerard cared nothing for shooting, had lately been compelled to forego his favourite occupation, to absent himself for a day's sport on the Seckendorf estates. He availed himself of the chance, and went out early, observing that we were a sufficient number without him, and he would only overload the boat. The special object of our water-party was a visit to some caves that were reckoned among the chief curiosities of the neighbourhood; but such wonders were not in Mr. Meredith's line.

Hilda had come down late that day, and at the last moment excused herself from joining us, on the plea of a severe and obstinate headache. She begged us on no account to defer the expedition, but to leave her and Francis Joseph to take care of each other. She would rest quietly till we returned.

This, we had calculated when we started at about noon, would be towards five or six o'clock at earliest. After rowing a few miles up the stream, we found it to have run so shallow in many places, owing to the long summer drought, that a succession of strandings and collisions with sandbanks seemed likely to form the staple of the excursion. Becoming tired of the struggle at last, and perceiving that the delay had already made it impossible for us to hope to reach a point so distant as the caves and get back again to the castle before nightfall, we cut short our expedition, an accident that brought us home two hours earlier than we had expected on setting off.

The party — Sophie, Jasper, Von Zbirow, Eva, and I—walked up from the boat-house through the woods to the castle. Here the path, suddenly emerging from the trees, brought us out on the lawn, directly opposite the windows of Sophie's boudoir, adjoining the billiard-room. They were open. Within sat Hilda, just where we had left her, on the sofa with her lace-work. Mr.

Meredith, his back towards the window, was standing by her side, and bending down to speak. The look of ill-resisted pleasure and interest on Hilda's face as she listened gave me an unpleasant thrill. She saw us first, but not until we were very near. Then for one moment she turned so pale that I thought Jasper, at least, could scarcely have failed to notice it. Her lips moved; she seemed to speak a few words in an undertone to Meredith, who, thanks to either a clear conscience or uncommon presence of mind, did not start, look round, or even stir. Two minutes afterwards we had joined them indoors.

'What!' he began immediately, with his natural loud laugh. 'Now you don't mean to say that you too have had to surrender at discretion, like myself—give up all your fine plans for the day? I was just telling Mrs. Gerard what a run of ill-luck has been mine this morning.'

His half-stupid imperturbable indifference would have enabled him to brave out the most impossible situation, and he proceeded to explain to us at length and without the slightest hurry or confusion what had brought him home so early. The birds were wild, the dogs at fault, the keepers out of temper. I forget the other particulars, but he gave them all, vituperating his mishaps and the authors of them in no measured terms. It was all an accident, it appeared—entirely insignificant, perfectly natural, perfectly explicable. Yet it was evident that Sophie felt annoyed. Jasper looked impenetrable; but even his was the peculiar indifference that seems to spring from self-command, not absence of provocation or perception. Von Zbirow fortunately was quite unconscious that anything awkward had occurred at all, and came to the general relief with a comical account of our own misadventures. Everybody then made exertions to talk industriously. But a blank and rather ghastly impression remained with me, and probably not with me alone.

After dinner, in spite of our efforts, we were silent, constrained, and dull, oppressed by a feeling akin to the discomfort caused by a coming storm. There was electricity charging the moral atmosphere—a kind of doubt and vague dread as to what the morrow might bring forth.

Now would Hilda succeed in convincing Jasper—I knew she would try—that Meredith bored her, and that it was only her fear lest she should be blamed for thoughtlessness or coquetry that had taken the colour from her cheek at that critical moment?

Chance came to her aid and Leopold's. The next morning at breakfast Mr. Meredith received a letter which seemed to preoccupy him immensely; a business letter, it appeared, rendering it imperative upon him to run over to Ludwigsheim for a few days. He had a long consultation with Sophie; deliberated as to whether it could be put off, decided in the negative; complained politely at having to desert his guests, though only for so short a time, as the party, before long, must break up altogether. Von Zbirow was leaving almost immediately; our departure was pending; the Gerards could not prolong their visit indefinitely; but business was business; the affair was urgent; go he must, and I felt sure that, for reasons best known to himself, he went most willingly.

'What a fortunate chance!' observed Eva to me. Almost too fortunate, something whispered, for a chance. Perhaps his going

was less obligatory than he chose to make it appear. But a more prudent, politic measure could not have been taken. The step and his short absence must tend to disarm Sophie's suspicions, to allay her displeasure and Jasper's, supposing that he did not disdain to attach some importance to the trifling occurrence of yesterday; whilst to outsiders like myself it seemed to show that, whatever explanations might have passed between Hilda and Leopold, he and she at least did not choose to expose themselves to become the theme of vulgar or ill-natured gossip.

He was away a week. Unavoidable delays, the procrastination of German men of business, kept him still in Ludwigsheim, whether against his own desire or not we were at liberty to conjecture. He was no correspondent—wrote briefly to Sophie after his arrival, complaining of the delay, and adding that in a day or two he hoped to send word when he might be expected home—a word that both his wife and guests just then were content to wait for many days if necessary.

His absence had the agreeable effect of idealising society at Castle Adlerberg. Von Zbirow came out of his shell. With Meredith he was always either captious and sarcastic or dumb; but Jasper and he had been friends from the first moment, and could be friends to more purpose now that there was no discordant male element to intrude between the great artist and the cosmopolitan *dilettante*. Those were days of strange pleasantness. The season, summer—delightful to the flesh; the scene, a mountain solitude—delightful to the eye; the circle suddenly harmonised, and become delightful to the spirit.

We saw little or no company at the castle. To all appearances such a week must have been felt prosy and uneventful after the bustle and gaiety of the theatrical performance. Impossible to give it a history. To those who know the process of mental dram-drinking it may be told in a few words; to others it must remain null. All its pleasures, down to the most minute, were touched with a magical light that gave them a monstrous momentary worth; but the several particulars faded fast from my recollection, each day and hour, as it were, effacing the last. There remains only one ineffaceable impression of alluring *idlesse*, beguiling walks and rambles, delicious music, impromptu concerts and plays, got up among ourselves for ourselves, and, over and above all, the strong consciousness of a fellow-mind being drawn by *force majeure* nearer and nearer to my own. This it was that made the puny, stunted roses of Castle Adlerberg sweeter than those of Persia, that gave the tame Franconian hills a glory beyond those of Switzerland, Sophie's piano more tone than other trichords, and otherwise acted on me like direct infatuation, so far as the word may apply to one who can never forget that this charm investing things around is perfectly unreal, and will bear no examination.

Our hostess herself thoroughly enjoyed our musical, poetical, and other rites. She was as vividly interested in such matters as in cookery, though less well informed, and always threw herself eagerly into art discussions, taking hints here and there for the education of Francis Joseph.

Hilda alone held aloof, as was natural, inevitable. With whatever germs of taste or appreciation Nature may have gifted her, these had perished long ago from want

of culture. She herself had worked sedulously to stifle them, so that her likings and dislikings might on all occasions conform to the arbitrary rules of fashion, without meeting with the slightest opposition from within. She had no part nor lot in the spirit that now dictated thought and conversation among us, and acknowledged as much. But it struck me as strange that she could thus tacitly agree to suspend her sovereignty without resistance, or appearing vexed or bored. Had she had a lesson, a caution? She seemed only to wish to efface herself without a murmur, sought solitude and quiet, and played the part of a silent spectator in most of our occupations. How had we changed places, she and I? Accident again. Out of the world of fashion Hilda, its prize pupil, either became a cipher, or moved awkwardly like a swan on land. But at Bellairs, in London, wherever we had met before, she had been in her element, supreme, and had led the way. It seemed a new order of things, with Hilda present, to find, not her, but myself, expected to take the lead, sought after, appealed to, and generally treated as if I were a kind of pivot on which the life and entertainment of the circle mostly turned, now that the circle were occupying themselves with matters about which she knew little and did not care at all.

Did it strike her that the gap between her and Jasper she had tried to hide was staring him in the face at last? Was she dismayed, suspicious, jealous? Neither. In the first place, she seemed curiously listless and preoccupied; in the second, she was always slow to conceive that another woman should rise above her in any man's estimation; and in the third, if she lacked insight into Jasper's mind she saw mine—one part of it, at least.

He wanted, or thought he wanted, to be friends with me now, forgetting, or ignoring, that he himself had made friendship impossible. Thrown together as we were now, to remain strangers was equally impossible. Still I fought against the idea that there could, for me, be any alternative but one—indifference. Had not I done with silly sentiment and perilous passion long ago? Eva shook her head, and again and again would have lectured me. I would not listen. Is it wrong to exercise one's gifts for being agreeable, such as they are, when one can? Was it not Sophie Meredith's wish and injunction that I should help her to entertain her guests? As for Mr. Gerard, was it my duty, because his illusions on the subject of his bride were passing or passed, to put on tasteless and unbecoming array, to be ungracious, taciturn, unresponsive, sing out of tune, and in a general way hide my talents in the earth, instead of exerting myself to do the best with them that I could? All because, forsooth, it might create in him a pang of passing regret, a look back on the chance that has not been! No, I was hardened myself, and that was all which it really behoved me to know.

With this and other sophistry of the kind I shut my ears to all Eva's homilies, and scouted the warnings of the monitor within. The day came when Von Zbirow was to leave us. Often lately I had noticed him watching me with quite a new expression of mingled surprise, solicitude, and displeasure. On that last morning we chanced to find ourselves for two or three minutes *tête-à-tête*. He was in a brown study, from which I roused him by some slight question, ask-

ing leave to keep for another week some songs he had lent me to copy.

Instead of replying he got up from his chair, saying brusquely,

'How long do you remain here?'

'I don't know,' said I carelessly. 'We proposed to have left before this, but somehow the time slips away. We seem almost like fixtures.'

Very gently he said, 'We are old friends, Picciola, are we not?'

'O, very old, as friends go.'

'Should I offend you, I wonder, if I were to take an old friend's—' he hesitated—'and an old man's privilege to give advice?' Here he paused again, then added significantly, 'Advice, too, which it would be very easy to take amiss.'

'O, give it; but I know,' I broke in—'you want me to go.'

He looked at me fixedly. A sudden impulse had driven me to cut short this coquetting with truth, at the risk of being thought brazen.

'And you mean to stay,' he said, with an evident surprise and censure, that, from him, pained me inexpressibly. 'Well, then, I will not affront you by saying anything more.'

'No, say what you please,' I urged, relenting; 'it shall not wound or affront me, from you.'

'To what use,' said he, 'if you know beforehand? And I think you do. Mrs. Gerard—'

'Well, Mrs. Gerard,' I repeated, feeling fierce and desperate, like an animal at bay; 'what of her and me this morning?'

'She is not of my world,' he exclaimed emphatically; 'all that you know as well as I. Not three words that I could help have I spoke with her since three weeks we are under one roof together. I like her not; she has no high mind nor a good heart, I fear. Still I must pity her. You might spare her something.'

I had promised not to take offence, and only laughed constrainedly.

'Spare her? O, how little you know!'

'Her husband cared for her once, I suppose. Do you deny that?'

I shook my head and smiled. 'He cared for her intensely. In spite of himself he cares for her still.'

'He will not long. If I were you I should not like even to think of what she will feel when she sees that he no more loves her the best. To be the living proof of it before her eyes I could not bear. It is one thing to hate your friend, another to be her executioner. Have you women no pity for each other?'

I met his eyes defiantly. 'What will she feel? Simply that her artifice is played out, and that play-acting, though it may impose upon a lover, cannot be kept up permanently before a husband.'

His look wounded me by a reproach deeper than words could convey. The next minute he had left me, and I sank down, buried my face in the sofa cushions, and burst into an uncontrollable passion of sobbing. For the first time in my life I felt as if I had forfeited, not friendship only, but esteem.

He had condemned me utterly, of course, as no better than Hilda. Yet it was not I, but another, who threatened her peace of mind. She feared nothing from me, deeming, rightly enough, that my heart was dead. All this he did not know, and I could not tell him. It was a lame defence, too, as I felt, with a flash of self-detestation.

Von Zbirow left that afternoon. A certain refining, elevating, serious, unselfish, and generally sound and saving influence, that had been our preservative hitherto, forsook us with him.

(*To be continued.*)

'LITTLE GAMES' IN INDIA.

Some Leaves from the Diary of an Indian Doctor.

A LATE minute of the Viceroy of India, on what is known as 'the Fuller case,' has created so much sensation in India, that I am tempted to recount the following story from the 'unpublished diary of an Indian doctor:'

In the year 1857, during the Mutiny, being then an assistant-surgeon, I suddenly received orders to join Whitlock's column, commonly known as the Sangor Field Force. I was at the time doing duty with the famous Sappers and Miners at Dowlaishwarum, and chumming in the same house with my friend Lieutenant W.

W. was so much cut up at the upset of our bachelor establishment, that he prevailed upon the commanding officer—not a bad fellow in his way—to allow him to accompany me. The Sappers and Miners had one or two companies on field-service with the various columns in Bengal, and to detach another subaltern from head-quarters to go on service was quite in the power of Colonel H.

So accordingly one fine evening, having said adieu to as pleasant a set of young fellows as ever formed a mess, many, alas, now gathered to their fathers, W. and myself, with each a servant to look after our traps, stepped on board one of the canal-boats, which was to take us down to Cocanada, there to await the steamer which was to take us to Bengal.

The voyage in these canal-boats is not at all unpleasant; they are large roomy boats with capital cabins, and W. and I, after our evening cheroot and the never-failing brandy pawnee, turned in and slept soundly till early morning.

I am a very early riser in India, as most men are who have served any time in that country. Residents in this colder climate can scarcely form any idea of the calm beauty of an Eastern sunrise: the first rosy blush of the sky announcing the coming of its lord, followed by the freckles of burnished gold on the light fleecy clouds, the gradual hum of returning life; the charming temperature, which admits of your at once plunging from your bed into this delightful bath of fresh air, without the tedious process of dressing. The earliest blush of dawn found me seated on deck in my pyjamas and night-dress, smoking the morning weed and thoroughly enjoying the delicious scenery around me. I soon became aware that a quantity of wild duck were passing over in flights of five or six at a time, and so flinging aside my cigar I called my boy* to unstrap my gun-case and get out my gun.

My repeated shots, most of them successful, aroused W., and the ducks were soon having a warm time of it from our four barrels. The native rowers had stopped the boat and were making capital retrievers, swimming

* In India—at least on the Madras side—all male servants, whatever their ages, are called 'boys.'

after such duck as fell into the canal, and bringing others out from the rice-fields around. The fun was fast and furious, and none enjoyed it more than the native rowers themselves, who saw visions of plentiful curry from the slaughter of the ducks. We had killed a sufficient number, and the sun, which had now arisen, was beginning to warn us that if we wished to reach our destination before he became unbearable we had better get on, when a last unlucky shot of mine brought about the disaster which forms the foundation of my story.

It was my last shot, fatal to a beautiful pin-tailed duck, that did the mischief. I was following the bird as it dropped, when I saw some distance off, but in the direct line of fire, the figure of a man arise from the paddy-field yelling like mad. 'Ah! Ma! Yah!' shouted the fellow, whilst he danced about as if a tarantula had bitten him. 'Ah! Ma! Yah!' went forth his shouts in piercing accents.

'Halloa! what's the matter?' exclaimed W.; 'by Jove, a snake has bitten him!'

'No, sar,' said my intelligent boy Ramsawmy. 'I think master done shoot him.'

And so it turned out. I despatched one of the boatmen to secure the man—a somewhat difficult process, for he seemed to think something more was going to happen to him; but at last he was persuaded to come alongside to the bank whither we had descended. It turned out on examination that two pellets of shot had entered his leg just about the calf; had he worn clothing of any sort over his legs, which natives do not, the shots would have made no impression, for they had barely broken the cuticle and lodged there. They were easily detached with the point of an ordinary penknife, and the man solaced with a couple of rupees, one for each pellet, and a handful of cheroots. He departed, evidently as pleased with the whole transaction as he had been at first frightened; for he followed our boat some little way down talking to the boatmen, who were the same caste men, and most probably acquaintances. At last he salaamed and took his leave.

We reached Cocanada somewhat later than we intended, from our double detention of sport and accident, but still in fair time for breakfast. We put up at the residence of the assistant-collector, Mr. H.; for although he was himself out in the district on jumabunda (*i.e.* collecting the taxes and settling revenue matters generally) he had written, when he heard of our coming, to say his house was at our disposal, and his servants had orders to look after us during our stay. Ah, dear old days of Indian hospitality! Are they gone never to return? Has competition, or some other 'ition,' completely knocked them on the head? Have they disappeared, like the rupee of our earlier days; and is eighteenpence henceforth and for ever to represent the two shillings of bygone times? Forbid it, O ye Fates! India is a hot place, and, in many respects, a dull and a trying one; but as long as men were hospitable, cheery, and kind to each other, and the rupee was what it pretended to be, two shillings, it was not an unbearable place. If the present state of things continues, India will soon be Russian; for I venture to prophesy Englishmen will scarcely care to go to India to cultivate *la misère;* that can be done at home much more profitably.

Our steamer, we found, would not be in for a day or two; so we proceeded to make ourselves as comfortable as we could in H.'s admirably furnished house. Our host and friend, a frequent visitor of the Sappers' mess, was not only a member of that most liberally-paid service, the Civil Service of India, but a man of considerable private fortune besides. His father, and I believe his grandfather before him, had been members of the old Company's Civil Service; and his name was like a household word in the land. I feel tempted almost to digress, and express my views on the powerful hold this same transmission of service from father to son gave us over the people of India; who perhaps more than, certainly as much as, any people in the world, look up to and respect this inheritance of power in the same family. It obtained not only in the Civil Service, but in the army; many a young cadet on arriving in India was sent to a regiment perhaps commanded by his father, or in which his father, and most probably his grandfather, had served. He joined not merely a regiment, but a body of devoted retainers, who were proud and happy to serve him; who looked upon him as a visible embodiment of the Raj whose salt they ate. W.'s (my travelling companion) father and grandfather had both been Company's military servants; and his grandfather on his mother's side had been an eminent civilian, sometime acting governor of the Presidency. The present system of officering our regiments from a staff corps but ill replaces this old custom; indeed is admitted on all hands, now it has had a fair trial, to be a lamentable failure. The present officers, many of whom have commenced their career in European regiments, and imbibed a contempt for the sepoy they never get over, care little or nothing for the sepoy, and the sepoy entertains much the same feelings for his officer. If a native army is necessary at all, it must be officered, as in the old Company's days, by a class of officers educated for, and devoted to, their particular duty. Perhaps this is not so essential in the Civil Service; the competition system has not in that branch been so great a failure—even if it has failed at all—as was predicted of it. But whilst I consider that there was a direct advantage in having men trained to the Services, whose family history and antecedents gave them a great and vital interest in the country, I go further, and think that men who have spent the best years of their lives in India have a greater claim for appointments for their sons than people of the same class who have spent their lives in England. A country squire, or clergyman, or doctor, who has spent his life in some village or town in England, surely gives his sons, from that very residence, an advantage for any career they may choose to adopt in that same locality over strangers who may choose to settle down there and compete with them. If so, why should the Indian Civil servant, or doctor, or soldier, not reap the same advantage for his children? Not only does it seem to me would it be a fair advantage for these servants of the Government to look forward to for their offspring, but I am convinced it would be immensely to the advantage of the Indian Government itself.

Be that as it may, H.'s house, as I was remarking, was a most comfortable one. With a billiard-room, a good swimming-bath, and a plentiful supply of the best ma-

gazines and newspapers, we had no difficulty in passing a comfortable day. His cook was, we knew, famous for his curries, and the beer was cooled to perfection; what could a couple of subalterns desire more? We were both brimful of military ardour, and most anxious to join the army in Bengal to see some service; but if the steamer was delayed a day or two more, we were quite determined not to break our hearts over the matter.

On the following morning we had returned from our morning walk, and were enjoying our chota hazree, or small breakfast, that curious but very enjoyable meal so peculiar to India; we were seated in the verandah overlooking the park-like grounds which surrounded the house, when suddenly we became aware of a procession entering them from the road. First came a man beating a tom-tom, or native drum, in a slow funereal manner; then a number of men, women, and boys chanting as it were a low dismal sort of song; then more women crying and beating their bosoms, with hair dishevelled, and in their midst, the centre of attraction, a low charpoy or native bed, on which a figure, apparently that of a corpse, lay extended; a promiscuous crowd of ragamuffins of all sorts, men, women, and children, all more or less howling, closed the procession. It seemed to us like a funeral, but we were puzzled to imagine what could lead them to bring it into a European gentleman's grounds. It slowly approached the house, and as it did so our servants came out into the verandah to see what was the matter.

Presently they had reached the gravel walk just in front of where we were seated, and putting down the bed the cries of the women and howls of the men ascended in one sustained chorus, and then suddenly ceased.

'What is the matter, boy? for goodness' sake ask them,' was our natural query.

Then commenced an excited conversation between our servant and the people, who all seemed desirous to talk at once. We could perceive, however, that our boy was getting somewhat excited, and plying one of the men with rapid questions: this lasted about a minute or more, when he turned and thus addressed us:

'This bad business, sar! Master remember shooting one man yesterday. They saying he gone dead, sar; native doctor look at leg, sar, saying that mortify, and man must die, sar!'

On hearing this I approached the cot, and there extended on it was our friend of yesterday. His face had been whitened with chunam, a sort of liquid lime or whitewash, his jaw was tied up, and his body covered with a cotton sheet, so that only the face was visible. A moment's glance showed me the man was breathing, and slipping my hand under the sheet, I soon satisfied myself that his pulse was beating with the measured and equable force of health. We were witnesses of a monstrous sham.

I held my own counsel, however, and proceeded by means of my boy, for my knowledge of Tamil was very limited, to make inquiries. Why had they not taken the man to the European dispensary and shown him to the English doctor? Preferred the native doctor. Good; but what had he done besides saying the man must die? 'Telling must take him and show to the burra sahib, collector gentleman,' and so forth.

I succeeded, after some little

conversation, in persuading the people the man at any rate was not yet dead, a conclusion in which the impostor himself at length joined, by opening his eyes and taking a visible interest in my proceedings. For I had turned down the sheet and was commencing an examination, luckily in this case not a *post-mortem* examination, of the injured limb. It had been bandaged up in an enormous quantity of rollers and cloths of different sorts, many of them not the most cleanly. Having with the assistance of his friends removed one or two, we came upon a bandage saturated with some red fluid, now dry, however, which certainly had a very ghastly appearance, and produced a howl of commiseration from the bystanders. The patient shut his eyes here and assumed once more the corpse-like aspect, which he seemed to think more suitable for the occasion, and my assistants seemed unwilling to continue. However, with the help of my servant and my knife I managed to remove this cloth; it had most probably been smeared with the blood of a fowl killed for the occasion, and we soon came down to the injured limb itself.

There it lay extended before me in, what my practised eye told me at once, the fair proportions and symmetry of health. It was smeared over, after the manner of the country, with the pulp of green leaves beaten up in a mortar with a little water, but its temperature, size, and shape told me at once it was a perfectly sound limb, and as free from 'mortification' as any one of my own limbs. I called W., who, after the manner of non-professional men, had rather stood aloof from close contact with a sick man, to come over and look at the limb, and explained to him in a few words what a frightful deception and lie the whole thing was. 'Now,' I said, 'we must get the man on his legs, and make him walk, and convince the people the whole thing is an imposture.'

This was more easily said than done; the man, however, who had found the use of his tongue, stoutly denied his ability to stand, and it was only by the assistance of one or two of his friends and our servants that we managed to raise him from his recumbent to a standing position. From this, however, he would immediately have fallen had we withheld for a moment our support.

I pointed out to the people and W. that the leg was in no way mortified, that indeed it was as sound and well to do as the other; and sending one of the servants of the house for some warm water I intended to wash off a small portion of the leaf plaster with which the leg was covered, and demonstrate the exact nature of the very trifling wound he had received.

But W.'s patience was exhausted. 'Confound the fellow!' I heard him exclaim; and the next moment he delivered from his left foot as smart a kick on the fellow's seat of honour as I ever remember to have seen administered.

The effect was magical; the whilom dead man and then complete cripple bounded off with the agility of an antelope. Away across the park he sped, running as I never before saw a man run, and almost immediately pursued by his duped friends, or at any rate friends who pretended to have been duped, for they pursued him with execrations and vituperations. The few who remained behind were loud in their protestations of indignation at the scoundrel's conduct, who they suddenly remembered had

always been a bad character. We could see the impostor running away, still pursued by the crowd that had accompanied him; still hear their cries of derision and opprobrium as we turned back to the house and resumed our seats at the table, laughing heartily at the failure of the plot.

But it might have been a very different matter. Had we not been on such friendly terms with H., the assistant-collector, as to have gone to his house, and thus been present to expose the cheat, and had H. been at home when the 'corpse' was brought to his residence, something like the following might have occurred: H., without examining the 'corpse,' which would not have fallen within his legitimate functions, would have ordered the friends to take it to the dispensary, and written a note, official or otherwise, to the doctor, asking him to examine the body and report. The body, it is needless to say, would not have been taken that day; and when next day a person was sent to make inquiries he would return with either a report that his friends had performed the usual funeral obsequies over it—that is, had burnt it—or some 'body' would be sent to the dispensary most probably in such an advanced state of decomposition, that the doctor would report he was unable to determine the cause of death. In a country where decomposition sets in with such rapidity as in India, *post-mortem* examinations are in nine cases out of ten of no avail unless performed almost immediately after death.

The consequences in either case would have been much the same. The impression left upon H.'s mind would have been that some European officers coming down country had shot, accidentally or otherwise, a native, and it would have been his duty to report it. Even if we had embarked for Calcutta on the very day of our arrival, and left that part of the country, the collector would have had no difficulty whatever in ascertaining exactly who we were, and we should have first awakened to the truth of our unpleasant position when hundreds of miles away from the scene of the transaction.

In the case related above, and in the time referred to, most probably a heavy fine of some hundreds of rupees, as compensation for the widow and orphans of the 'dead' man, would, with a severe reprimand, have met the merits of the case. In the present day, 'Good gad,' as my friend H. would say, 'there is no knowing what would take place.'

The fact of the matter is, the mild Hindoo is not entirely without guile. He is not at all a bad fellow in his way, and people who have lived long in the country and understand him well, with very few exceptions, treat him not only with great, but uniform kindness. The length of time servants remain in the same family in India should in itself be a conclusive answer to the hasty accusations occasionally brought by impulsive people, who generally are quite ignorant of the matter, of ill-treatment of our Indian fellow-subjects by the Anglo-Saxon. I venture to think, heretical as it may appear, that a closer bond of sympathy and affection exists between masters and servants in India than obtains in this the mother country; and that your English official in that country does not require to be taught humanity by his brother in England.

However, be that as it may, the above simple, but perfectly true, story may serve to show that the native of India has also sometimes his 'little games.'

LANDSCAPE MEMORIES.

No. III. AN AUTUMN DAY IN THE COUNTRY.

THE nuts have ripen'd in holt and shaw,
The brambles have brook'd the evil claw,
And summer is over, and close to cover
The bright-eyed pheasants warily draw;
But as nights grow longer
The heat grows stronger,
As bleak cold weather comes in with the thaw.

Leaves are turning to red and brown,
And the full clear stream comes merrily down;
The trouts they leap where the eddies sleep,
And a faint sound comes of the distant town,
With a clang of bells
That falls and swells,
As on the grass the tired lie down.

Apples are ripe for the cider-press;
Woods are gay in their autumn dress;
Red and gold, all strong and bold,
Earth pranks herself, with no distress
Because of her age—
She war will wage
To the last, and die in her royal dress.

O, but the grass is cool and sweet
Under the tread of our naked feet!
And the water is cool in each broad pool,
And little brown fishes come up to meet
Each strong lithe limb,
As we bathe and swim,
Or lie on the margin and dabble our feet.

And blue kingfishers dart and shoot
Down by the stream where the alders root;
With a thought of the hue of the heaven's blue,
And a thought of innocent joy to boot—
O, just for a day
Let us rest and play,
And remember the child, and forget the brute!

Ay, in this autumn afternoon,
When the time draws on to the hunter's moon,
Let us forget, and be children yet,
Trouble will come again over soon!
Each aching breast
Be lull'd to rest
By rustle and ripple and cushat's croon.

B. MONTGOMERIE RANKING.

AN AUTUMN DAY IN THE COUNTRY.

See LANDSCAPE MEMORIES

LARRY DOOLAN'S TIGER-HUNT.

TWO of us were walking down the Koraie Pass, my friend Fairlegh and I, one morning early in February 1860. I was on my way to Bombay, to catch the mail steamer that was to convey me back to old England, after an absence of five years, during which I suffered much hardship and exposure in the memorable Indian Mutiny, and was now bundled out of the country as fast as I could go with a year's leave on half-pay, and a medical certificate which made out that I was nearly *in articulo mortis*.

At two stages from Nagpore, I met with my old friend Fairlegh, and, after staying one night with him, he accompanied me as far as the first dak bungalow towards Nagpore, that of Koraie.

As we stood on the top of the pass and looked over the varied landscape of miles upon miles of dark forest, intersected by numerous jungle streams that lay beneath us, and upon the little village lying at the foot of the ghaut we were descending, my friend said,

'I never come down to Koraie without thinking of a trick we played on a young Irishman, belonging to a detachment which marched through here a year or two ago, on their way to some station in Madras. The officers were a very jolly hospitable set of fellows, and one was an old acquaintance of mine, and whilst we were in company, which was for three or four days, they insisted on my joining them at mess. The first meal I took with them was breakfast, and there was something in the way of brawn on the table. Now I never touch pig in any shape or way in this country, so I was not going to be tempted; but my friend Mac, seeing me looking at it, advised me not to try it, as one of them had shot a wild pig a week before, and its inexhaustible properties were beginning to create a shadow of doubt.

"Here, Naidoo, what pig is that?" called out Mac to the mess butler, a fat oily-looking Madrassee, who grinned as he replied,

"That pig, sar? Why, that pig Cap'in Andersin killin' way up de jungle dar!"

"You rascal, I believe this pig never saw the outside of this village."

"Mi bapre, sahib, what fur masta tink I make cookin' bazar pig

that fashin'? No, sar! that Cap'in Andersin pig: got 'im plenty yet —he big as one buffler!"

'However, I laughingly remarked that it was all the same to me, for I never partook of pig in any shape or form in India.

"What, not a cut of a nice ham or a rasher from a tin of Overland bacon? Bedad, ye wouldn't be after refusin' that, would ye?" broke in a red-haired little man opposite, whose speech betrayed him as a native of the sister island.

"Not even a home rasher would tempt me out here. In the first place, it is not a fit food for a tropical climate; and secondly, it is looked upon with universal abhorrence by all around."

"Ah, is it the naytives ye mane? Well, then, I'd ate it to spite 'em, I would."

"Well, if there were any moral principles involved in it, I would do so too; but in the absence of such inducements I would, as I have to mix much with all classes of natives, rather not depreciate the esteem in which I might be held, especially as I am strict with them in matters concerning their own religion."

"Faith, an' what is it ye have to do with their religion?—if they have any, the bastes!"

"You had better not enter into a controversy with Fairlegh about religion, Doolan. He's a moulvie and a pundit all rolled into one," said Mac; "and you've precious little knowledge of any, except what the P.P. of Kill-'em-by-inches, or whatever you call your paternal place, taught you by help of a broomstick."

"Killinchy, Killinchy, ye omadhaun, an' it's Castle Doolan ye mane when ye speak of me paternal home."

"All right, my boy," replied Mac, winking at me. "I say, Fairlegh, shall we have a look round the track, and see if there are any snipe?"

"I have no objection," I replied, rising; and we went out together.

"Now look here, Fairlegh," said Macpherson, when we were out in the open. "I want to play Doolan a trick, and you can help me. It will do him a lot of good, for of all the bumptious, do-everything, know-everything fellows I ever came across, this one beats them all. We have long been on the look-out for an opportunity for taking a rise out of him, and now I think you can assist us."

"Well," I answered, "I am not much given to practical jokes, but what is it I can do?"

"Do? I'll tell you what to do. I've got a grand idea. You know that nasty old cantankerous camel you have, that roars whenever any one goes within twenty yards of him? Well, I want you to post him somewhere on a jungly road to-night; and then, at mess, we will begin to talk about tigers. Doolan is sure to contradict everything that is said, and to deny, as he has been doing, that there is a tiger between Allahabad and Nagpore; and thus we'll persuade him to come out, and I am sure he'll bolt the moment he hears the camel."

'There appeared to be no great harm in the trick, and I thought it might be a good lesson to the young fellow, who was an addle-brained rattle-pate, and rather a nuisance in the regiment; so our plans were laid. The camel was an extraordinarily surly one; the mere sound of a footstep in his vicinity was enough to make him growl and roar in their peculiar way. I did not care to send him very far out, for Koraie is a tigerish place, and I did not want the tables to be turned on me by losing my camel; so I told the driver

to post him in a thicket by the roadside, about a mile out of the village.

'Well, at mess that evening our friend was in high feather; he condemned this thing and praised that, and laid down the law like a chief justice, and all the time my little friend Mac was winking at those who were let into the secret, and chuckling to himself with delight.

'Dinner over, most of the party, including the victim, adjourned to my tent, where there was a bright fire, and coffee and chocolate for those who liked such things, and grog for the others who liked something stronger. We drew our chairs round the fire, and Mac began the campaign.

"I say, Fairlegh, any tigers about here?"

"O, yes," I replied; "lots. Here's Doolan won't believe it, he says."

"No more will I. Now look at here now, we've been trapesing through miles of this wretched scrub that lines this dhirty ould wather-coorse ye calls a road, an' sorra a fut of one have I seen. An' they tell ye ould women's tales o' man-aters at ivry turrn. It's as much an imposition as the whole counthree is—an' that, be the phowers, is the naked truth."

"But there is a man-eater on this ghaut, Fairlegh, is there not?" asked Mac.

"Certainly; he may be throttling some poor wretch at this very moment, for all we know."

"Thin why doesn't he come out to a ghintleman wid a gun in his fist, who doesn't care a rap for a whisker of the dhirty spalpeen, instead of breaking the skulls o' these black naygurs that's got nothin' in 'em afther all—nothin' at all, at all! But what's the use o' talking? I'd bet a tin-phound note agin a brass button that I'd go through the length an' breadth of the land, and niver see one."

"I'll bet you Fairlegh shows you one to-night if you'll go out with him," said Mac.

"Castle Doolan to a cottar's shebeen that he doesn't!"

"What do you say, Fairlegh?" asked Mac.

"Well," I answered, "I don't know about the certainty; but if Mr. Doolan will venture out with me we may come across one. We will see what my shikaree says. Here, Moula, do you think there is any chance of a tiger to-night?"

"Who knows? But the moon is bright, we can find out by seeing."*

"Well, get out the guns."

'The shikaree set to work in a systematic way which showed he was accustomed to such nightly movements, and we could see the Irishman's eyes following him.

"Is it going out to-night ye mane?" he asked.

"Certainly, if you wish it."

"And what would ye be afther a-doing whin ye're out?"

"O, we will walk along through the forest to the foot of the hills. There is a cart-road through the jungle, and as the moon is bright we may get sight of one of the animals you are desirous of seeing."

"An' it's trapesing about in the jungles all night ye would be, whin it's up in the marnin' and fall in afore gun-fire, wid the Colonel a-swearin' at yez as ye're not dressed afore ye're out o' bed. Now look at here now, Larry Doolan's the boy for a tiger or any other baste in broad daylight, but he'll be hanged if he's going to give up his night's rest for one!"

"But, Doolan, you've got a bet on it; don't show the white feather, man!" cried the others.

"Don't ye talk about white

* A favourite native expression, 'Deshné se maloom hoga.'

feather, Trotter, or ye'll have to answer for it, bedad! Me oncle Terence Doolan, rest his sowl! has drilled holes in Phaynix Park through more men than ye've got buttons on yer jacket, me bhoy."

"That may be, and Terry Doolan, your venerable uncle of drilling notoriety, would have been delighted at the opportunity offered to-night of drilling another hole in a royal tiger; so brace up, old boy, for the family credit."

"Now, now, now, look at here now, Meejor, it's jokin' ye are entoirely, isn't it, whin ye talk of goin' afther savage bastes at this toime o' night?"

"No," I replied, "I am not joking. I so often go out on a fine moonlight night that you see my servants make no question about it, but get everything ready at a few moment's notice that is likely to be required. I daresay some of your friends here will go with us."

"Yes, we'll all go," shouted the rest; and poor Doolan was hustled out with a gun stuck on his shoulder, looking a perfect martyr. I was half sorry I had lent myself to his humiliation; but I thought that very likely the lesson would save him from much trouble in after-life, for very often a good snub at the beginning of one's career, if well deserved, does one a lot of good.

'Well, as we went along these mischievous lads told wonderful stories of tigers springing out of

thickets upon travellers, and how they roared to frighten their prey, and quite worked up poor Doolan's feelings to the highest pitch. As we approached the wooded part of the road I enjoined strict silence, and made Doolan walk ahead with me, the others following. Every night-jar that flew up made him jump; when at last, in the gloomiest part of the road, we heard a most savage bubbling sort of growl or roar, very familiar to my ears, but electrifying to poor Paddy, who stopped short, and exclaimed,

"O, be the phowers, what's that?"

"Look out, Larry, there's a tiger coming!" whispered Mac.

'Another roar.

"O blissid Moses, we'll all be kilt entoirely! Look at here now, Meejor, I'm paid for food for powther an' bullets, but it ain't in my commission for to be aten by wild bastes like a knacker's horse, so just roight about face. O, the saints be wid us!" (An awful roar.) "Let me go, Mac; stay an' be aten av ye will. Mother o' Moses! come along, Meejor, like a dacint body, do now!"

'Here another roar and a bang in the air from my gun, which was followed by a demoniacal explosion from the camel, put the finishing touch to poor Doolan's fortitude; for he turned and bolted up the road, calling on all the saints to protect him, whilst we fired off a salvo in the air, and nearly died with laughter.

'I never saw Larry Doolan again, for the regiment marched early, and my camp moved in a different direction. But I heard from Macpherson a year after, and he said that Paddy was a deal more bearable, and whenever he was inclined to be obstreperous in his old way an allusion to the Koraie tiger generally brought him to his senses.'

'His countrymen are not often so cowardly,' I remarked.

'No, nor was Doolan a coward in the main. I believe he was a fairly plucky man, and has since done good service in the field; but it was rather trying to his nerves to be taken out at night to a jungly road, and made to listen to awful roars by what he supposed was a savage tiger. The whole thing was strange to him, and was not, as he expressed it, "in his commission."'

THE POETRY OF PERSIFLAGE.

So far as I know, there is no perfect equivalent in English for the French word *persiflage*,—unless, adopting a vulgarism, we call it the art of poking fun. The lack is owing no doubt to the partial absence of the quality itself. We are not without *persifleurs*, as I hope to show presently; but *persiflage* is not primarily or in itself an English attribute. We are humorous and we are witty; but, somehow or other, *persiflage* pure and simple—the play of light and airy sarcasm, of wit which is rather lambent than pungent, of humour which is rather bright than grim—does not seem indigenous to the soil, and is, on the whole, but rarely to be met with in the course of English literature.

Yet when the *persifleurs* do occur in English they are exceedingly admirable. I should name Chaucer as the first example, and, after him, Shakespeare, in those exquisite wit-combats which we associate with the names of Beatrice and Benedick, of Rosalind and Orlando. Here, as in everything else, Shakespeare is preëminent, doing with innate and inimitable grace what his more ponderous contemporaries failed even in attempting. Ben Jonson could be witty and be humorous, but then how heavily, and with what obvious effort! Not even Dryden had the mastery of *persiflage;* he was too precise in mind; he never hovered, like Charles Lamb, upon the confines of truth; everything he saw was clearly cut and caparisoned, and complete as far as it went. He was an admirable satirist, but satire is not *persiflage;* in which, on the other hand, Butler might have been successful, had he not been so downright and dogged in temperament. *Hudibras* is, as we all know, a delightful mock epic, but it is not *persiflage*—its lines are like so many blows delivered accurately and offensively upon the head of the enemy. Nor can you say of Wycherley and Congreve, the two great masters of artificial comedy, that they possessed the happy art of graceful ridicule. Their satire is too mordant; their epigrams bite and burn, instead of playfully scorching; and they are surpassed with ease by the more kindly humour of the delicious genius which produced *She Stoops to Conquer* and the *Vicar of Wakefield.* For the great poem of *persiflage*—for the greatest work of art in that way in this, or probably in any language—we must go to the *Rape of the Lock*, which is the first of the only two perfect specimens of the kind which we possess. The second is that wonderful piece of sustained raillery, *Don Juan*, which in its carelessness and freedom is even superior to its predecessor. In the *Rape of the Lock* the art is perhaps the least bit too obvious; everything is so admirably well contrived that your admiration is reserved first for the accomplished artist, and only afterwards for the work of art. But in *Don Juan* the *persiflage*, if less well proportioned and less effective from one point of view, is, on the whole, more enjoyable,

as being more spontaneous and fresh. *Persiflage* ought not to be too obviously associated with the midnight oil, as, with all its airiness, we cannot help associating the great work of Pope. It ought not to be too accurate and correct, too level in its excellence—in fact, too uniformly brilliant. It ought to have the appearance of being unpremeditated—of being the chance outpouring of an overflowing mind. And such, in a great measure, is *Don Juan*, which its author unravelled swiftly and unconcernedly from the web of his very powerful intellect. It has no trace of effort, no indication of anxious and most patient polish. The epigrams, when they come, come unexpectedly, and the intervals between them are made up of passages of the lightest and most delicate *persiflage*.

Then, after Byron, the first names that strike us are those of Messrs. Martin and Aytoun, whose *Bon Gualtier Ballads* have been the source of exquisite delight to thousands, and contain, indeed, some of the best instances of modern parody. Their very popularity, however, renders it unnecessary to dwell upon them here, nor is it necessary to do more than allude to the very clever handiwork of men like Brough, A'Beckett, Thackeray, Shirley Brooks, and Mortimer Collins. What I propose to do is to glance very briefly at some of the best works of living, or recently living, *persifleurs*, of whom the gathering is by no means small or unimportant. The time, indeed, is prolific of such poets, for it is essentially one in which *persiflage* finds itself most prevalent and powerful. Now, more than ever, does the *zeit-geist* dispose us to look at things from the cynical point of view of men of the world, who, if they did not laugh, must cry. There is too a genial, as distinguished from a morbid, cynicism, which is kindly in its expression, and if it pokes fun at life does so with an eye to the suppression of the bad and to the elevation of the good in it. Many an earnest thought and aspiration is hidden under the seeming carelessness of a *persifleur*.

It is, however, quite possible to be a *persifleur* from a pure enjoyment of the art of quizzing. Mr. Calverley especially appears to be a writer of this stamp. His little volume of *Fly-Leaves* is full of delicious fun. There is no *arrière pensée* about it. The author is a *moqueur* and nothing else. His is a kindly mockery, but mockery it is, and of the quaintest character. At one time it is a picnic party that he quizzes:

'Kerchief in hand, I saw them stand;
In every kerchief lurk'd a lunch;
When they unfurl'd them it was grand
To watch bronzed men and maidens crunch
The sounding celery-stick, and ram
The knife into the blushing ham.

Dash'd the bold fork through pies of pork;
O'er hard-boil'd eggs the salt-spoon shook;
Leapt from its lair the playful cork:
Yet some there were to whom the brook
Seem'd sweetest beverage, and for meat
They chose the red root of the beet.

Such are the sylvan scenes that thrill
This heart! The lawns, the happy shade,
Where matrons, whom the sunbeams grill,
Stir with slow spoon their lemonade;
And maidens flirt (no extra charge)
In comfort at the fountain's marge!'

Some of these lines are excellent specimens of the mock-heroic. At another time the poet selects the itinerant organ-grinder as the object of his praises:

''Tis not that thy mien is stately;
'Tis not that thy tones are soft;
'Tis not that I care so greatly
For the same thing play'd so oft:

But I've heard mankind abuse thee;
And perhaps it's rather strange,
But I thought that I would choose thee
For encomium, as a change.'

The inevitable monkey is accordingly celebrated with bewitching gravity:

'And thy mate, the sinewy Jocko,
From Brazil or Afric came,
Land of Simoom and Sirocco,
And he seems extremely tame.

There he woo'd and won a dusky
Bride, of instincts like his own;
Talk'd of love till he was husky
In a tongue to us unknown.

Side by side 'twas theirs to ravage
The potato-ground, or cut
Down the unsuspecting savage
With the well-aim'd cocoa-nut:

Till the miscreant Stranger tore him
Screaming from his blue-faced fair;
And they flung strange raiment o'er him,
Raiment that he could not bear.'

Another mood finds Mr. Calverley thinking of his 'First Love,' and wondering where she is now, and what she is doing. He asks:

Has she wedded some gigantic shrimper,
That sweet mite with whom I loved to play?
Is she girt with babes that whine and whimper,
That bright being who was always gay?'

Then answers:

'Yes; she has at least a dozen wee things!
Yes; I see her darning corduroys,
Scouring floors, and setting out the tea-things
For a howling herd of hungry boys.'

But then he is for ever congratulating himself upon his 'scapes from matrimony. Here is the way in which he opens 'On the Brink:'

'I watch'd her as she stoop'd to pluck
A wild flower in her hair to twine;
And wish'd that it had been my luck
To call her mine.

Anon I heard her rate with mad,
Mad words the babe within its cot;
And felt particularly glad
That it had not.'

'Precious Stones' is the title of a lyric in which he celebrates the loyalty with which some ladies preserved the cherry-stones which 'my prince' left upon his plate. For a time he assumes the personality of one of the ecstatic damsels, and tells how

'Lightly the spoonfuls enter'd
That mouth on which the gaze
Of ten fair girls was centred
In rapturous amaze.
Soon that august assemblage clear'd
The dish; and, as they ate,
The stones all coyly reappear'd
On each illustrious plate.

And when his Royal Highness
Withdrew to take the air,
Waiving our natural shyness,
We swoop'd upon his chair:
Policemen at our garments clutch'd;
We mock'd those feeble powers;
And soon the treasures that had touch'd
Exalted lips were ours.'

He concludes:

'Let Parliament abolish
Churches and states and thrones;
With reverent hand I'll polish
Still, still my cherry-stones.
A clod, a piece of orange-peel,
An end of a cigar,
Once trod on by a princely heel,
How beautiful they are!'

Modern toadyism is here pleasantly ridiculed. Mr. Calverley in another place quizzes the supernaturally contented portion of mankind, of whom he says:

'Friend, there be they on whom mishap
Or never or so rarely comes,
That, when they think thereof, they snap
Derisive thumbs.

The trout, the grouse, the early pea,
By such, if there, are freely taken;
If not, they munch with equal glee
Their bit of bacon.

When for that early train they're late,
They do not make their woes the text
Of sermons in the *Times*, but wait
On for the next;

And jump inside, and only grin
Should it appear that that dry wag,
The guard, omitted to put in
Their carpet-bag.'

At another, the object of his 'solemn mockery' is the (late) inoffensive beadle of the Burlington Arcade, who is thus addressed in grave Byronic rhythm:

'Yes, ye are beautiful. The young street boys
Joy in your beauty. Are ye there to bar
Their pathway to that paradise of toys,
Ribbons, and rings? Who'll blame ye if ye are?
Surely no shrill and clattering crowd should mar

The dim aisle's stillness, where in noon's mid-glow
Trip fair-hair'd girls to boot-shop or bazaar;
Where at soft eve serenely to and fro
The sweet boy-graduates walk, nor deem the pastime slow.'

In a third instance, the motives that animate the ordinary money-hunter are exposed with charming frankness and *insouciance:*

'Canst thou love me, lady?
I've not learn'd to woo;
Thou art on the shady
Side of sixty-two.
Still I love thee dearly!
Thou hast lands and pelf;
But I love thee merely,
Merely for thyself.

Wilt thou love me, fairest?
Though thou art not fair;
And I think thou wearest
Some one else's hair.
Thou couldst love, though, dearly;
And, as I am told,
Thou art very nearly
Worth thy weight in gold.

Love me, bashful fairy!
I've an empty purse;
And I've "moods" which vary,
Mostly for the worse.
Love me, lady, dearly,
If you'll be so good;
Though I don't see clearly
On what ground you should.

Love me, ah, or love me
Not, but be my bride!
Do not simply shove me
(So to speak) aside!
P'r'aps it would be dearly
Purchased at the price;
But a hundred yearly
Would be very nice.'

Elsewhere Mr. Calverley's humour runs into the vein of parody, a popular form of *persiflage*, in which he is very happy. Indeed, we have had few things so able as his poetical travesties since 'Bon Gualtier' furnished the *reductio ad absurdum* of 'Locksley Hall.' Many of his predecessors have written ably in particular cases, but few single writers have produced so many admirable specimens of this sort of *tour de force.* Here, for example, is Browning in his wildest mood:

'You see this pebble-stone? It's a thing I bought
Of a bit of a chit of a boy i' the mid o' the day—
I like to dock the smaller parts o' speech,
As we curtail the already curtail'd cur
(You catch the paronomasia, play 'po' words?)—
Did, rather, i' the pre-Landseerian days.
Well, to my muttons. I purchased the concern,
And clapt it i' my poke, having given for same
By way o' chop, swop, barter, or exchange—
"Chop" was my snickering dandiprat's own term—
One shilling and fourpence, current coin o' the realm.
O-n-e, one, and f-o-u-r, four
Pence, one and fourpence—you are with me, sir?'

Here is Miss Ingelow, with all her affectation of a diction marked by the revival of old obsolete terms and other curious eccentricities of expression:

'Boats were curtsying, rising, bowing
(Boats in that climate are so polite),
And sands were a ribbon of green endowing,
And O, the sun-dazzle on bark and bite!...

Song-birds darted about, some inky
As coal, some snowy (I ween) as curds,
Or rosy as pinks, or as roses pinky—
They reck of no eerie to come, those birds!

But they skim over bents which the mill-stream washes,
Or hang in the lift 'neath a white cloud's hem;
They need no parasols, no goloshes;
And good Mrs. Trimmer she feedeth them.'

It is impossible not to sympathise with the *persifleur* when, at the conclusion of the piece from which I quote, he draws the moral:

'O, if billows and pillows, and hours and flowers,
And all the brave rhymes of an elder day,
Could be furl'd together, this genial weather,
And carted, or carried on "wafts" away,
Nor ever again trotted out—ah me!
How much fewer volumes of verse there'd be!'

Here the writer is doing a positive service to the public in casting ridicule upon a style which so largely vitiates the poetry of the day, and especially of the imitators of Mr. Tennyson. Finally,

here is his perversion of poor Tom Moore, in a strain in which Mr. H. S. Leigh has also succeeded excellently:

'Twas ever thus from childhood's hour!
My fondest hopes would not decay;
I never loved a tree or flower
Which was the first to fade away!...
I never nursed a young gazelle;
But I was given a paroquet
(How I did nurse him if unwell!);
He's imbecile, but lingers yet.
He's green, with an enchanting tuft;
He melts me with his small black eye;
He'd look inimitable stuff'd,
And knows it, but he will not die!...

And then I bought a dog—a queen!
Ah, Tiny, dear departing pug!
She lives, but she is past sixteen,
And scarce can crawl across the rug.
I loved her beautiful and kind;
Delighted in her pert bow-wow:
But now she snaps if you don't mind;
'Twere lunacy to love her now.'

Altogether, we are inclined to regard Mr. Calverley, in the depth and variety of his humour as well as in his piquancy and freshness, as one of the best of living *persifleurs*. Nor is the dignity one to be despised, when we remember that there can be as much perfection in a lyric as in an epic, in one kind of poetry as in another. The *persifleur* naturally deals with trifles, but he need not treat them in a trifling manner. It is not so easy as it seems to write with brightness, lightness, and the sense of proportion. It is very possible for *persiflage* to bore one if it is sustained too long. But this writer seems to know instinctively where to stay his hand.

The late lamented Lord Neaves, who is perhaps better known than Mr. Calverley, though not by name, had less airiness and more earnestness than his younger rival, his *persiflage* having generally the very definite object in view of working some social or scientific reformation. Nor is it improbable that his pointed *exposés* of some of the social follies and scientific absurdities of the day have had more effect in demolishing the influence of these than many sermons and leading articles that have been directed against them. Such power has ridicule that, if aptly managed, with an art which is as all-important to *persiflage* as to any other effort at creation, it can undermine and finally destroy anything that is really deleterious in any field whatever. The Darwinian theory may be said to have received its death-blow, so far as the general public is concerned, when Lord Neaves published his famous song on 'The Origin of Species.' That was when it was fashionable to deduce that origin from a 'Monad.' As the *moqueur* said:

'Not one or two ages sufficed for the feat,
It required a few millions the change to complete;
But now the thing's done, and it looks rather neat,
Which nobody can deny.

The original Monad, our great-great-grandsire,
To little or nothing at first did aspire;
But at last to have offspring it took a desire,
Which nobody can deny.

This Monad becoming a father or mother,
By budding or bursting produced such another;
And shortly there follow'd a sister or brother,
Which nobody can deny.'

But it is not necessary to dwell upon anything so familiar. Only mark the sly shrewdness of the moral drawn:

'But I'm sadly afraid, if we do not take care,
A relapse to low life may our prospects impair;
So of beastly propensities let us beware,
Which nobody can deny.

Their lofty position our children may lose,
And, reduced to all fours, must then narrow their views,
Which would wholly unfit them for filling our shoes,
Which nobody can deny.

Their vertebræ next might be taken away,
When they'd sink to an oyster, or insect, some day,
Or the pitiful part of a polypus play,
Which nobody can deny.'

Afterwards, when the theory was developed into the supposition that man was the descendant of 'a group of marine animals, resembling the larvæ of existing Ascidians,' so called 'from the resemblance which many of them exhibit in shape to a two-necked jar or bottle,' Lord Neaves came out with a 'Darwinian Ditty,' called 'The Leather Bottèl,' which clenched the business:

'Now Darwin proves as clear as mud,
That, endless ages ere the Flood,
The Coming Man's primeval form
Was simply an Ascidian worm;
And having then the habit got
Of passing liquor down his throat,
He keeps it still, and shows full well
That man was once—a leather bottèl.'

'The Origin of Language' is treated by our *persifleur* more respectfully. All he says is, he knows naught of the matter:

'Who knows if what Adam might speak
Was mono- or poly-syllabic?
Was Gothic, or Gaelic, or Greek,
Tartaric, Chinese, or Arabic?
It may have been Sanskrit or Zend,
It must have been something or other;
But thus far I'll stoutly contend,
It wasn't the tongue of his mother.'

Thus laughingly does he dispose of the whole question. He declines to discuss anything so unprofitable. As he says:

'In courtship suppose you can't sing
Your Cara, your Liebe, your Zoé,
A kiss and a sight of the ring
Will more quickly prevail with your Chloe.
Or if you in twenty strange tongues
Could call for a beef-steak and bottle,
A purse with less learning and lungs
Would bring them much nearer your throttle.'

He concludes, however, with the most Philistine preference for his own language:

'The speech of old England for me;
It serves upon every occasion!
Henceforth, like our soil, let it be
Exempted from foreign invasion.
It answers for friendship and love,
For all sorts of feeling and thinking;
And lastly, all doubts to remove,
It answers for singing and drinking.'

'Stuart Mill on Mind and Matter' is analysed in a series of stanzas, of which the concluding one is not only concluding, but conclusive:

'If there's neither mind nor matter,
Mill's existence, too, we shatter;
If you still believe in Mill,
Believe as well in mind and matter.'

In 'Dust and Disease' we have Professor Tyndall's celebrated lecture reproduced *in petto* with an effectiveness to which the lecture, able as it was, could not possibly lay claim; for, for the one who would peruse the lecture, hundreds probably would read the lyric, and be impressed more deeply by its 'gay wisdom' than by the Tyndallian style, fascinating as it is to those who can appreciate it. Lord Neaves does not—how could he?—poke fun at the theory; but he used it as an engine for poking fun all round at our legislators, lawyers, ecclesiastics, doctors, diplomatists, and people of fashion.

He had his say, indeed, on almost every question of current social interest. That of women's right to a degree in medicine, Lord Neaves regarded with kindly patronage:

'Yet without a degree, see how well the Sex knows
How to bind up our wounds and to lighten our woes!
They need *no* Doctor's gown their fair limbs to enwrap;
They need ne'er hide their locks in a Graduate's cap;
So I wonder a woman, the Mistress of Hearts,
Would descend to aspire to be Master of Arts;
A Ministering Angel in Woman we see,
And an Angel need covet no other Degree.'

His lines on the 'Permissive Bill' have done more harm to the cause Sir Wilfrid Lawson has at heart than even that amusing gentleman's own speeches. And that is nc light boast. Rarely has a proposed enactment been more pithily or memorably summed up:

'"Pray what is this Permissive Bill
That some folks rave about?
I can't, with all my pains and skill,
Its meaning quite make out."

"O, it's a little simple Bill
That seeks to pass *incog.*,
To *permit* ME—to *prevent* YOU—
From having a glass of grog."'

Again, his verses in deprecation of the gloom with which a mistaken zeal surrounds our Sundays—in Lord Neaves's country especially—are full of that combined humour and good sense which makes his *persiflage* at once so pleasant and so wholesome. The irony is very happy:

'The face of kind Nature is fair;
But our system obscures its effulgence:
How sweet is a breath of fresh air!
But our rules don't allow the indulgence.
These gardens, their walks, and green bowers,
Might be free to the poor man for one day;
But no, the glad plants and gay flowers
Mustn't bloom or smell sweetly on Sunday.

What though a good precept we strain,
Till hateful and hurtful we make it!
What though, in thus putting the rein,
We may draw it so tight as to break it!
Abroad we forbid folks to roam,
For fear they get social or frisky;
But of course they can sit still at home,
And get dismally drunk upon whisky.

Then, though we can't certainly tell
What mirth may molest us on Monday,
At least, to begin the week well,
Let us all be unhappy on Sunday.'

It is hardly possible that so pungent a performance as this can have been without some good effect. His solitary onslaught upon literary follies is contained in his 'sensational song' on 'How to make a Novel,' which may be compared with Mr. Ashby-Sterry's bright little effort in the same direction. Lord Neaves remarks:

'Never mind your *plot*;
'Tisn't worth the trouble:
Throw into the pot
What will boil and bubble.
Character's a jest;
What's the use of study?
All will stand the test
That's black enough and bloody....
Tame is virtue's school;
Paint, as more effective,
Villain, knave, and fool,
With always a Detective;
Hate for Love may sit;
Gloom will do for Gladness;
Banish Sense and Wit,
And dash in lots of Madness.

Stir the broth about;
Keep the furnace glowing:
Soon we'll pour it out
In three bright volumes flowing.
Some may jeer and gibe:
We know where the shop is,
Ready to subscribe
For a thousand copies.'

Mr. Ashby-Sterry's analysis is not quite so severe, but it is equally truthful as applied to the ordinary namby-pamby story, which tells the usual love-tale, and no more:

'VOL. I.
A winning wile,
A sunny smile,
A feather:
A tiny talk,
A pleasant walk,
Together!

VOL. II.
A little doubt,
A playful pout,
Capricious:
A merry miss,
A stolen kiss,
Delicious!!

VOL. III.
You ask mamma,
Consult papa,
With pleasure:
And both repent
This rash event
At leisure!!!'

In the matter of parody Mr. Calverley is run very close by Mr. Lewis Carroll, or may we not rather call him by the name he bears by baptism—Mr. Lutwidge Dodgson? Mr. Dodgson has written, one way or another—either in *Alice* or *Phantasmagoria*—some charming comic poetry, but none of it, perhaps, comes up in excellence to his travesties. Even the 'Walrus and the Carpenter,' exquisite as it is, gives way to 'Jabberwocky,' which is the finest possible skit upon the unintelligible 'poetry'

of the fleshly school. Everybody —boy or girl, man or woman— ought to know it by this time:

'"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogroves,
And the mome rathes outgrabe.'

Mr. W. S. Gilbert has a 'poem' of very similar character to this, written, I believe, before it, and ridiculing, I imagine, the sentimental ballads to which so much 'music' is set nowadays, and with which young ladies torture us in every drawing-room. It is extremely clever. It runs:

'Sing for the garish eye,
When the moonless brandlings cling!
Let the froddering crooner cry,
And the braddled sapster sing.
For never and never again
Will the tottering beechlings play,
For bratticed wrackers are singing aloud,
And the throngers croon in May!...

Hasten, O hapful blue—
Blue of the shimmering brow;
Hasten the deed to do
That shall roddle the welkin now!
For never again shall a cloud
Out-thribble the babbling day,
When bratticed wrackers are singing aloud,
And the throngers croon in May!'

In its way this is almost, if not quite, as good as 'Jabberwocky,' whose author has parodied Mr. Swinburne more obviously still —in one of his peculiar rhythms especially—in the piece he calls 'Alatanta in Camden Town.' Thus:

'O that languishing yawn!
O those eloquent eyes!
I was drunk with the dawn
Of a splendid surmise—
I was stung by a look, I was slain by a tear, by a tempest of sighs.

And I whisper'd, "I guess
The sweet secret thou keepest,
And the dainty distress
That thou wistfully weepest;
And the question is, 'License or banns?' though undoubtedly banns are the cheapest."

Then her white hand I clasp'd,
And with kisses I crown'd it;
But she glared and she gasp'd,
And she mutter'd, "Confound it!"
Or at least, it was something like that, but the noise of the omnibus drown'd it.'

Take, again, as another most successful specimen of this sort of *persiflage*, Mr. Dodgson's now well-known burlesque of Southey's 'Father William.' A verse or two will suffice to show the happiness of the travesty:

'"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
"And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head—
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

"In my youth," Father William replied to his son,
"I fear'd it might injure my brain;
But now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again."

"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too weak
For anything tougher than suet;
Yet you finish'd the goose, with the bones and the beak—
Pray, how did you manage to do it?"

"In my youth," said his father, "I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength that it gave to my jaw
Has lasted the rest of my life."'

Talking about parody, few have done better in this way than Mr. H. S. Leigh, whose *Carols of Cockayne* contain some diverting specimens thereof. I note one especially on Wordsworth's 'We are Seven,' which is really comically treated. It is called 'A Pastoral Story, after Wordsworth:'

'I marvell'd why a simple child,
That lightly draws its breath,
Should utter groans so very wild,
And look as pale as Death.

Adopting a parental tone,
I ask'd her why she cried;
The damsel answer'd, with a groan,
"I've got a pain inside!

I thought it would have sent me mad
Last night about eleven."
Said I, "What is it makes you bad?
How many apples have you had?"
She answer'd, "Only seven."

"And are you sure you took no more,
My little maid?" quoth I.
"O, please, sir, mother gave me four,
But *they* were in a pie!"

"If that's the case," I stammer'd out,
"Of course you've had eleven."
The maiden answer'd, with a pout,
"I ain't had more nor seven!"

I wonder'd largely what she meant,
And said, "I'm bad at riddles;
But I know where little girls are sent
For telling taradiddles.

Now if you won't reform," said I,
"You'll never go to heaven."
But all in vain; each time I try,
That little idiot makes reply,
"I ain't had more nor seven!"

POSTSCRIPT.

To borrow Wordsworth's name was wrong
Or slightly misapplied;
And so I'd better call my song,
"Lines after *Ache-Inside*."'

There is also an excellent travesty upon the 'Raven,' with the refrain of 'Nelly Moore,' and a parody on Moore already referred to; but the above, perhaps, is the best thing Mr. Leigh has done in this direction.

In Mr. Frederick Locker's *London Lyrics* we come upon some genuine examples of the spirit which makes graceful fun with an underlying earnestness of tone. There is an obvious moral in the lines called 'Beggars,' in which a happy *exposé* is given to the common want of charity that shelters itself under the epithet of 'indiscriminate:'

'As I walk from my club, and am deep in a strophe
That rolls upon all that is delicious in Sophy,
I'm humbly address'd by an "object" unnerving—
So tatter'd a dame must be "highly deserving."

She begs, and I'm touch'd, but I've much circumspection;
I stifle remorse with a soothing reflection—
That cases of vice are by no means a rarity—
The worst vice of all's indiscriminate charity....

"There's a present for you, sir!" Yes, thanks to her thrift,
My pet has been able to buy me a gift:
And she slips in my hand—the delightfully sly thing!—
A paper-weight form'd of a bronze lizard writhing.

"What a charming *cadeau!* and," said I, "so well made;
But perhaps you don't know, you extravagant jade,
That in casting this metal a live harmless lizard
Was cruelly tortured in ghost and in gizzard?"

"Pooh, pooh!" said my lady (I ought to defend her;
Her head may be giddy; her heart must be tender),
"Hopgarten protests they've no feeling; and so
It is only their muscular movement, you know."

Thinks I, when I've said *au revoir*, and depart
(A Comb in my pocket, a Weight at my heart),
And when wretched mendicants writhe, we've a notion
That begging is only a muscular motion.'

More playful in character, but not less effective in its way, is the little lyric called 'An Old Buffer,' in which youthful scepticism is contrasted with maternal orthodoxy, not without a gleam of fun being shed upon the latter by one who sympathises less with the mother than the child:

'"A knock-me-down sermon, and worthy of Birch,"
Say I to my wife, as we toddle from church.
"Convincing, indeed," is the lady's remark:
"How logical, too, on the size of the Ark!"
Then Blossom cut in, without begging our pardons,
"Pa, was it as big as the 'Logical Gardens?"

"Miss Blossom," said I, to my dearest of dearies,
"Papa disapproves of nonsensical queries;
The Ark was an Ark, and had people to build it;
Enough that we read Noah built it and fill'd it:
Mamma does not ask how he caught his opossums—"
Said she, "That remark is as foolish as Blossom's."'

This has all Mr. Locker's exquisite airiness and ease.

Now let us dip into the volumes published by Mr. Locker's brother in art, Mr. Austin Dobson, who differs from Mr. Locker chiefly in the clear-cut classicism of his verse and in the decisive brightness of his wit. Mr. Locker's muse moves more—what shall I say?—heartily along, more careless of the exact mode of expression, or, if not really more careless, at least apparently so. Where Mr. Locker is humorous rather than witty, Mr. Dobson is witty rather than humorous. You see this in the rapid interchange of chaff in the now well-known 'Idyll in the Conservatory,' which is a gem of drawing-room *persiflage*:

'"If I were you, when ladies are so lavish,
Sir, as to keep me every waltz but two,
I would not dance with odious Miss MacTavish,
If I were you!"

"If I were you, who vow you cannot suffer
Whiff of the best—the mildest 'honey-dew,'
I would not dance with smoke-consuming Puffer,
If I were you!"

"If I were you, I would not, sir, be bitter,
Even to write the *Cynical Review*."
"No; I should doubtless find flirtation fitter,
If I were you!"

"Really, you would! Why, Frank, you're quite delightful!
Hot as Othello, and as black of hue;
Borrow my fan; I would not look so frightful,
If I were you!"'

There is something very clever, too, in this 'Dialogue from Plato,' in which the tone of colloquy is quite in the manner of the best society. Here, again, the *persiflage* is of the best:

'"You're reading Greek?" "I am—and you?"
"O, mine's a mere romancer!"
"So Plato is." "Then read him—do;
And I'll read mine in answer."

I read: "My Plato (Plato, too,—
That wisdom thus should harden!)
Declares blue eyes look doubly blue
Beneath a Dolly Varden."

She smiled. "My book in turn avers
(No author's name is stated)
That sometimes these philosophers
Are sadly mistranslated."

"But hear, the next's in stranger style:
The Cynic School asserted
That two red lips which part and smile
May not be controverted!"

She smiled once more. "My book, I find,
Observes some modern doctors
Would make the Cynics out a kind
Of album-verse concocters."

Then I, "Why not? Ephesian law,
No less than time's tradition,
Enjoin'd fair speech on all who saw
Diana's apparition!"

She blush'd—this time. "If Plato's page
No wiser precept teaches,
Then I'd renounce the doubtful sage,
And walk to Burnham Beeches."

"Agreed!" I said. "For Socrates
(I find he, too, is talking)
Thinks Learning can't remain at ease
When Beauty goes a-walking."'

There is less of the spirit of *persiflage* in Mr. Dobson's second volume than in his first; the 'Proverbs in Porcelain' being pitched generally in a higher key. 'Cupid's Alley,' however, is a good specimen of this peculiar vein, whilst there is a charming air of gay *insouciance* in the various triolets, rondels, and rondeaux contained in the collection. What, for example, could be better than this?—

'Freeze, freeze, O icy wind!
Lucilla's cap's awry;
No signal undesign'd
To those that read the sky.

Dull drags the breakfast by;
She's something on her mind.
Freeze, freeze, O icy wind!
Lucilla's cap's awry.

"You're tired." "And you're unkind."
"You're cross." "That I deny!"
"Perhaps you're both combined."
"I'm tired of you. Good-bye."
Freeze, freeze, O icy wind!
Lucilla's cap's awry.'

I have already quoted a little thing from Mr. Ashby-Sterry's *Boudoir Ballads*, the best thing in which—the best thing, indeed, that the writer has produced in verse—is that very pretty piece,

'Pet's Punishment,' which is in the happiest spirit of banter:

'O, if my love offended me,
And we had words together,
To show her I would master her,
I'd whip her with a feather.

If then she, like a naughty girl,
Would tyranny declare it,
I'd give my pet a cross of pearl,
And make her always bear it.

If still she tried to sulk and sigh,
And threw away my posies,
I'd catch my darling on the sly,
And smother her with roses. . . . .

And if she dared her lips to pout,
Like many pert young misses,
I'd wind my arm her waist about,
And punish her with kisses.'

But if I attempted to enumerate all the skilful *persifleurs* of the present day, where should I stop? There is Mr. Gilbert, from whom I have already quoted, and whose *Bab Ballads* would supply an inexhaustible fund of comical quotation. If there ever was a *moqueur*, it is he. Not only his lyric verses, but his plays, are full of the essence of *persiflage*—of the disposition to 'poke fun' at everything, from love to lollipops. Look, too, at Mr. Burnand, with his exquisite ballad of 'True to Poll;' at Mr. Courthorpe, with his gracefully-humorous 'Paradise of Birds,' surpassed only in occasional felicity by poor Mortimer Collins's 'British Birds.' Look, too, at the clever work of Mr. Cholmondeley Pennell, whose *Pegasus Resaddled* is almost, if not quite, as mirth-provoking as his *Puck on Pegasus*. There is something of the true spirit of raillery in the amusing description of 'School Feeds,' reminiscent as the *dénouement* is of a well-known cut in *Punch*:

'Alone amid the festive throng
One infant brow is sad;
One cherub face is wet with grief—
"What ails you, little lad? . . .
It's clear you're sadly off your feed;
Your laughing looks have fled;
Perhaps some little faithful friend
Has punch'd your little head?

You miss some well-remember'd face
The merry rout among—
The lips that blest, the arms that prest,
The neck to which you clung?
A brother's voice? a sister's smile?
Perhaps—you've burnt your tongue?

Here, on a sympathetic breast,
Your tale of suffering pour.
Come, darling! tell me all." "*Boo-hoo!*
I can't eat any more!"'

Mr. Sawyer deserves to rank among the best of modern parodists. Some of his travesties are exceedingly successful; the following, on 'Home they brought her Warrior dead,' among the number. It is very wicked, but it is very clever.

'Home they brought her sailor son,
Grown a man across the sea;
Tall, and broad, and black of beard,
And hoarse of voice as man may be.

Hand to shake and mouth to kiss,
Both he offer'd ere he spoke.
But she said, "What man is this,
Comes to play a sorry joke?"

Then they praised him—call'd him "smart;"
"Tightest lad that ever stept."
But her son she did not know,
And she neither smiled nor wept.

Rose, a nurse of ninety years,
Set a pigeon-pie in sight.
She saw him eat. "'Tis he! 'tis he!"
She knew him by his appetite.'

Here I must stay my hand, for I have not space at my disposal to do more than refer to the poetry of *persiflage* which has been given to us, not only by English writers like Matthew Browne, H. J. Byron, G. J. Cayley, H. Savile Clarke, H. B. Farnie, J. R. Planché, Robert Reece, G. O. Trevelyan, Godfrey Turner, and Edmund Yates, but by O. W. Holmes, Bret Harte, E. C. Stedman, J. G. Saxe, J. Russell Lowell, and other gifted Americans. I have dwelt too long in very pleasant ways, and now must stop my pen.

W. DAVENPORT ADAMS.

THE MODERN ZODIAC:

AN ARTIST'S ALMANAC OF ENGLISH SOCIETY

WITH BAG AND BAGGAGE.

I.

BRIGHT NORMANDY.

YESTERDAY among the pleasant downs and woods of Kent—to-day I am in Normandy, seated on the trunk of a fallen tree, as tired as I can be. But here at last are shade and tranquillity. A leafy screen defends me from the hot sunshine; a pleasant quietude prevails, broken now and then by the rasp of a saw close at hand, the tinkle of bells from some passing *voiture*, and the soft murmur of the surges down below.

Before me is a rude broken declivity, at the foot of which the sea stretches out into the hazy distance, hazy with too much glare. The sea dimples gently with the tide, and is of a charming green, streaked with yellow lines of shallows, where lurk the treacherous sand-banks. To the left the coast-line runs out blue and clear, till it is lost in the horizon; and over there, glittering in the sunshine, are the roofs of Trouville the gay, nestled snugly under the hills. Nearer at hand, on a low spit of land projecting into the bay, is Havre, with white dazzling houses and great black ship-building sheds; its harbour, with a forest of masts, and the white pier-head and lighthouse, cleaving the waves. Steamers in the bay swing lazily at their moorings; and a big Atlantic monster in the offing shoots out a puff of white vapour athwart the blue, like that sea-beast, leviathan, idly spouting on the deep. Inland the prospect is limited to a steep hill-side and a white chalky path, that leads to the heights and to the bluff head-land of Cape la Hève, that stretches lion-like into the sea, with its wrinkled front and tawny forelock.

I am as tired as I well can be, —for it was roughish at sea last night, and the sun rose over great green rollers crested with foam,—and this attempt to form a settlement upon a foreign shore is accompanied with many difficulties. We have had struggles with *commissionnaires;* with porters who would charge us almost as much for carrying our baggage a hundred yards as its transit would cost from here to Jerusalem; and we have been inveigled by a smiling woman to partake of a repast, in which a tarnished shrimp incautiously plucked by a youngster, has been set down in the bill for two francs. My ears too are deafened by incessant jabbering of *propriétaires*, expatiating on the advantages of their *pavillons* and apartments; anxious care is gnawing at my heart-strings, for at this moment I don't know what roof will cover me and my belongings. There are children in whom I am interested camping out some miles hence; a wife, happily energetic and determined, carrying on the battle with the *propriétaires*. But for myself, I am a beaten man; my legs, my heart, will carry me no farther. I can only sit upon this log, and smoke.

A white road is just in front of me, that comes winding up from the town, among *pavillons*, kiosques, and clumps of shrubs; the minaret of the *établissement* of

St. Adresse peers out from below the tricolor floating gently from its flagstaff. A delicious westerly breeze has sprung up, cool, sweet, and pure; fresh from thousands of miles of sea-waves. Along the white road comes a gently trickling current of traffic. Workmen in faded blue-cotton garments tramp easily along, pausing, as they gain the crest of the hill, to rest, and view the prospect. Children in twos and threes—at sight of whom one ceases to believe the little wretches in the fashion-plates exaggerated specimens—duly attended by stout *bonnes* in white caps with shining ruddy faces. Then a *fiacre* comes jingling along, with monsieur from Havre, and madame his wife, and the young mademoiselle, sallow sympathetic-looking females, who are making the *course aux phares* —the drive to the lighthouses on the crest of the cape. Then come more *bonnes*, and now red-legged soldiers of the 119th Regiment of the Line, small and swart, quite foreign-looking contrasted with the burly Normans. A troop of scholars from the Lycée, of all colours and shades, with the kepis and braided frocks that are so in keeping with academic studies. Then pass more children,—poor people's children these, acute and adroit,—the girls in black *calençons*, with skirts of many washed-out colours; soldiers, again,—of the artillery this time, —trudging up to the fort on the heights; loaves of dark drab-coloured bread under one arm, and nests of tin canteens full of potage swinging by a strap from the other.

This nook in which we have found a haven and resting-place is, it seems, a wood-yard. We are trespassing on the hospitality of the carpenter, whose men are hard at work sawing away at a log. In England we should have a saw-pit here, but they manage things better in France. Instead of sinking an unhappy workman overhead in a pit, deprived of light and air, and half blinded by the falling sawdust, they elevate the log to be sawn upon high trestles. The top sawyer enjoys a breezy and elevated position; the bottom sawyer stands firmly and comfortably on the level of the wide earth, and shares the light and air equally with his more highly-paid comrade. The contrast is characteristic, and runs through everything. In England we only care for the top sawyers. There are disadvantages of course. When it is necessary to mount a new log upon the stage, the process is lengthy: a wooden derrick is brought forward—there is much hauling and pulling before the matter is arranged.

As I sit, half dozing on my log, I notice that suddenly the saw, which has been rasping along in a slow and easy rhythm, increases all of a sudden to double-quick time. I hear a quick step among the logs. It is the master, a red-faced choleric man in a white blouse: this garment he throws off energetically, and begins to tap the timber right and left with the French equivalent for a two-foot rule. The sawing goes on with frightful vigour; too much zeal, for suddenly it stops with a rasping tooth-breaking crash—they have struck upon a nail. The red-faced carpenter dances a mad war-dance of rage, and hurls at his workmen's heads a perfect torrent of injurious words. The sawyers look at their master in sullen silence, with dogged consciousness of guilt. The carpenter's anger, though fierce, is transient. The sub-sawyer sets to work to sharpen his saw, and the top sawyer helps

his master to mark off a bulk of timber with a chalked string. Then our carpenter pockets his rule, and puts on his blouse with the air of a man who has accomplished a great work, and marches off to the accompaniment of the vigorous rasping of the reinstated saw. He will require repose after this, and refreshment, which he will get at his favourite *café*, over a *fil* of cognac, while he pushes to and fro the speckled clattering dominoes.

The excessive energy of the saw would be fatal to repose if long continued. Happily it subsides as the footsteps of the master recede, and things reassume their tranquillity. A carriage now drives up—an open basket-work carriage, driven by an olive-complexioned coachman in a chocolate livery.

'Has monsieur chanced to observe two nurses—*deux nourrices*—with their infants?'

Monsieur, among the crowd of *bonnes* and infants who have passed, has failed to notice any particular pair; but the sub-sawyer has been more observant. It is a capital opportunity to leave off sawing while he courteously explains to Pierre the coachman that two nurses, such as he describes, have climbed the path towards the Bois.

Well, Pierre is quite content to wait till they descend. It is only the horse who is impatient; but then he is a good deal worried by flies, and has not the gift of reason to tell him that it is of no use fretting.

At the farther end of our log, another nurse seats herself with a clump of children—a portentous family for France, seven of them, ranging from zero to eight years in age. The two elder are charming round-faced girls: not at all content these to sit in a row by the nurse, and prattle about their shoe-ties and the gentility of their new hats; but full of energy, boastful, domineering, a trifle quarrelsome. My heart gives a warmer throb—I feel sure that these are little compatriots.

'I dump off here; 'oo tan't,' cries the youngest, perched upon the giddy height of a balk of timber.

The elder demurely plants herself before me:

'Dites-moi quelle heure est-il, s'il vous plaît.'

'Ah, you are English,' as I reply in my native tongue. 'I am English too, but I can talk both French and English.' This with an air of proud superiority.

On the strength of our common fatherland, we become excellent friends; but Fate, in the shape of the white-capped *bonne*, cuts short our intercourse, and once more I am alone.

Then, chatting loudly and cheerily, come down the steep path *les deux nourrices*, for whom the chariot waits. Deep-toned reproaches from the coachman at their tardiness; laughing shrill repartees from the nurses. The fat brown babies in their arms—fat, round, and tranquil, with great soft eyes—gaze tranquilly at the stranger. The calmness of those babies is amazing; they survey mankind with the same tranquil air *dessus dessous* on the nurses' laps. Yes; they are brown all over, those babies—soft jolly little things that will grow up into dark-eyed heart-breaking girls by and by. There is a little refreshment for the nurses, as it happens, in the carriage — some big sunburnt pears and a bottle of light wine. Pierre disposes of the cork with his knife. He hasn't got a baby to nurse, but he takes his share of the wine. The bottle is presently

emptied, and left upon the sward. One has often read how, in the desert, when an animal lies down to die, the sky, previously clear of all living things, becomes forthwith speckled by vultures approaching the feast. Just in the same way, a *gamin*, previously invisible, swoops down upon the abandoned bottle, hides it under his tattered jacket, and hurries away furtively with his bare dusty feet. And now they all pass away,—chattering nurses, *insouciant* babies, Pierre the coachman, the two sawyers, the furtive *gamin*,—'and leave the world to darkness and to me.'

The sun has disappeared, the sea is green no longer, but a cold and sullen gray. Over the broad wet sands long lines of carts are creaking dolefully along. The voices of the drivers come up hoarse and discordant. The pier-light shines out with ruddy glow, and along the heights the yellow beacons gleam like stars. Lights too are twinkling from the houses, and softly shining among the trees; the church-bells in the town are jangling softly the *salut*. A vague uneasiness creeps over me; there is no sign as yet of any of my belongings; and I don't know where to look for them, if they don't come to look for me.

At last familiar voices sound through the gloom—children's voices in cheerful recognition. Materfamilias too appears, fagged, but content. A home has been found at last; dinner is in prospect.

A garden black with shadow, lights twinkling beyond. Through a grove with pear-trees thickly hung with fruit, we come to a little plateau of gravel, where there are chairs and a little green bench. Beyond is the *salle à manger*, where a white cloth gleams invitingly. A fragrant smell of cooking refreshes the wearied soul. I sink upon the little green bench, and light a pipe in thankfulness.

II.

THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA.

'You smoke a pipe, sir; I smoke a pipe with you,' said a gruff voice from the darkness; and an old man came forward into the half light by the window.

This was our host, M. Beauvoisin, the proprietor of the Maison Beauvoisin. A rather untidy old gentleman, in a flannel jersey very tight at the wrist, and trousers that would have been better for buttons, only they would not have held; and if they had held, he would not have used them. There is something of the look of an old salt about him, in his grizzled weather-beaten face, and in his rolling gait.

Something of the seaman, too, in the way he handles his pipe. Sailors rarely smoke a pipe right out. They carry one in the waistcoat-pocket half loaded, a little fresh tobacco is crammed in upon this; a few lusty puffs, and the pipe goes back to the waistcoat-pocket. Beauvoisin has a pipe in his waistcoat-pocket, and crams a screw of my tobacco on the top. He would puff away lustily; but he has no light, neither have I.

'Du feu, ma poulette, du feu!' cries the old man loudly.

Ma poulette is a careworn old woman in a gray hood and black skirt, with a face that would be comely if you could see it for the dirt. About *ma poulette* I must tell you a little story. There are two families of us in this expedition: I and my wife and two little girls; Achates and Madame Achates and two boys. My wife

and Achates are energetic and determined; his wife and I are lymphatic and as indolent as circumstances will allow. Achates and my wife were therefore commissioned to hunt jointly for lodgings. Furnished rooms are most difficult to meet with in the neighbourhood. French families, when they go to the seaside, generally take a furnished *pavillon*, and bring with them plate, linen, kitchen utensils, and all the minor accessories of housekeeping. Thus you may find plenty of furnished *pavillons* at St. Adresse, and the same thing applies to most of the watering-places on the coast; but lodgings completely furnished, with attendance, are very rare. These rooms at the Maison Beauvoisin were only found after a whole day's anxious search. The rooms were airy and pleasant; but Achates, who likes to depreciate anything he is going to buy, objected to the quality of the attendance.

'There is that old woman now—she is dirty, very dirty.'

Beauvoisin acquiesced: 'Dirty, yes—isn't she dirty?'

'But couldn't you change her?' suggested Achates.

'Mon Dieu, non: c'est ma femme,' replied Beauvoisin. And then he called the poor old lady his *poulette*, and made her bring him a light from the farthest kitchen of all. A garrulous boastful old fellow, a clog and burden to his womankind, who are his most devoted slaves. He is proud of his personal appearance, evidently. How old would monsieur take him to be?

'Fifty, perhaps,' I say at random.

He is seventy-nine. Yes, he remembers Napoleon, the great Napoleon. He was a boy when Napoleon visited Havre. Seventy years ago Beauvoisin went to sea—more than seventy years ago—in the year 1804, or thereabouts. One of his early voyages was to Martinique, then besieged by the English. They were trying to run the blockade, and ran their ship aground, and were all taken prisoners. After being a prisoner for three months, Beauvoisin ran away; he and a companion swam out to the roads. The bay was swarming with sharks, but they thought nothing about that. There were the ships swinging at their anchors, their lights shining over the water, and liberty at the end of the passage. Beauvoisin reached an English brig. They were glad enough to take him as a hand, for they were short-handed, although he was an enemy; but sensible people are never enemies. The brig was bound for Greenock, and landed him there. What became of his companion he did not know till ten years afterwards, when they met in the market-place of Havre, each with his bride on his arm. Yes, they had both been married on the same day.

'Ah,' continued Beauvoisin, with a sigh, 'I have had much experience of marriage, monsieur; sixty years of it, no less—with one wife after another, and have brought up many families. What I shall do with this one, I don't know.'

After hearing this, one could excuse a good deal of selfishness in old Beauvoisin—all the emotions but that, wear themselves out by use. The old man had lived in Scotland for five years, and there had learnt the sail-maker's trade; then he came back and set up in that line of business at Havre. Nobody knew him; he had been given out as lost at sea. He took an English name, and gave himself out to be American. He was afraid of

the conscription if he avowed his nationality. All the English and American sea-captains came to him for sails. Then, when he was past the age to serve, he took back his own name. Since then he had met with many misfortunes, and he darkly hinted that he owed them to his wife.

'When I married this one here —du feu, ma poulette, du feu!' gasping at the end of his pipe.

'When you married this one here?'

'Ah, then I had a grand house full of furniture, and I had one hundred and eighty shirts.'

'A hundred and eighty shirts!'

'Yes, that's true enough. Sacré papier, entendez-vous, vieille? Du feu! I have not got many now,' he went on, with a dark meaning glance towards his faithful wife, who was toiling over the charcoal furnace to keep his pipe supplied. 'But pipes I have still—hundreds of pipes. I will give you one, if you please.'

Then the shrill little maid came out to say that dinner was ready, and I escaped from the ancient mariner.

III.

WITH THE MERMAIDS.

St. Adresse lies in the bay formed by the spit of land on which Havre is built and the headland of the Cape la Hève, spreading out along the hill-side, and occupying the sides of a narrow valley leading to the chalk-plateau above. Its great feature is the magnificent sea-view you obtain from the rising ground. The first thing an Englishman thinks about at a sea-side place is the beach; but our beach at St. Adresse is rather hard to find. It is put out of the way, as it were, consigned to the back streets; and when you reach it, the aspect is not enchanting. It is steep and rough, with jagged groins sticking up here and there; paved with the most villanous boulders, intersected with unsavoury rivulets. A general wash seems to be going on all along the line; all kinds of woollen garments flutter in the breeze, and rows of rickety wooden cabins remind you somewhat of a navvy's encampment about an incipient railway cutting. But after all, at the right time of the tide, bathing is very pleasant here. On the opposite side of the Channel public bathing is a somewhat ghastly process. You disappear into a kind of wooden hearse, and are shot secretly out into the sea, becoming dead to the world for a time, and hailed by your friends when you reappear almost as one newly risen. But the French make of their bath a pleasant relaxation; it takes a long while about, but if you have nothing else to do, what matters?

The prudent man will purchase a *maillot* in the town, which costs about five francs; jersey and drawers all of a piece. He will save the cost, for he will otherwise have to pay twenty or thirty centimes a time for the hire of garments that don't fit him. A lady, too, had better buy her own costume if she does not wish to appear a perfect figure of fun to an admiring gallery on the beach. If the salt is carefully rinsed out of them before putting away, the garments will serve for another year. If you bring your own bath-towel and a pair of beach-slippers, you will only have to pay the simple charge for the cabin and a couple of sous to the girl who brings your tub of hot water. Having taken your box, you disrobe, and, wrapping yourself in your *peignoir*, stalk majestically down a plank to the

margin of the sea. Here you throw off your wrapper, hanging it over anything that may be handy, and having kicked off your slippers, you plunge in. The water is delightfully mild and soft; every one about you seems to be in full enjoyment. A floating platform is moored a little way out at sea, where tired swimmers can rest and lounge. Sundry fair naïads are kicking up their heels on this, their cries and laughter sounding pleasantly over the waves. A boat patrols the water at a short distance from the shore to give assistance if necessary, and it is a favourite diversion with the young water-nymphs here to seize the rope-ladder that hangs from the stern, and be towed along for a cruise some distance out to sea. The women here are, many of them, strong bold swimmers, which does not accord with one's ideas of Frenchwomen generally. But I fancy there is a good deal of Creole blood among the fair Havraise.

It is not often you see a Frenchwoman with a really good fine figure; but yonder is one who has just cast off her white *peignoir*, and is standing by the margin of the sea poising herself for a moment before she rushes in. Fully conscious, too, that she is a very charming sight in her handsome well-fitting dress, her round shapely arms held above her head, her white ankles glittering in the sunlight. On her head is a Spanish hat of yellow straw, into which her hair is gathered; her dark eyes gleam brightly, and her lips are parted with a smile, expectant and yet half reluctant. She is away like a flash, and now you can only see the crimson *toupe* of her hat bobbing among the waves. Now she raises herself in the water, throws her white arms over her head, her golden armlets glitter as she throws herself back, and seems languidly to recline on the surface as if it were her natural element. I feel rather in love with that young woman, do you know; and if I were amphibious she should be my sea-bride, and we would have a charming little *pavillon* down below, adorned with cockle-shells.

One afternoon about the bathing time, when everything was gay and tranquil, it came on to blow suddenly. A moment before, the day had been bright and sunny, the waves lapping tranquilly on the beach; and now on the instant the sky is overcast with a cold graying gloom, the sun is obscured by hurrying scud, and the wind comes howling in with fierce intermittent gusts. As far as the eye can penetrate into the dark storm-horizon, rows of white-crested billows are flashing eagerly along, each one higher than the last. The swimmers' boat is driven ashore; the bathing platform is lost to sight, buried under the foaming waters. Madame Dumont, the old woman who owns the baths, wrings her hands in despair. There is a brig yonder, anchored in the bay, waiting for a tide; she was lying just now, her shape reflected in the tranquil water, as if she and the sea together were cut out of cardboard. Now she dips and plunges, curvets and labours in the water, her yardarms dipping into the waves. She seems to be driving through the water fast out to sea, so rapidly do the waves dart by her. As we watch her, of a sudden she seems to have stopped in her career; the waves no longer flash by her; she appears for a moment to be at perfect rest. The fact is she has broken away from her anchors, and is drifting rapidly to the shore. Unless they

get some sail upon her, so that she may edge away to sea, she will be cast away under that rugged beetling cliff. And now you can see a dark sail hauled up, fluttering and flapping madly. The vessel ceases to drift, and even begins to forge ahead slowly.

The interest is intense of this fight between man and the elements, heightened by the thought of the possible tragedy now imminent. On our English coast such a sight would be witnessed by crowds of excited spectators; every turn, every move, in the game would be eagerly criticised and noted. But a smart shower of rain has cleared the beach; everybody has gone about his business. Only Madame Dumont in her bureau is lamenting over her imperilled planks. And the ship with its fluttering sail is left to its last struggles unheeded. Wind and sea have got the better of her now—she has drifted close under the headland; she must touch, you would think, and go to pieces. But no—she has just cleared it; she weathers the point, and is hidden to our view. The whole scene disappears in mist and gloom, and we leave the sea to its raging, and the seamen to their battle with the storm.

Morning comes upon us brisk and joyous. The gale of last night has moderated into a strong refreshing breeze. The sea is blue but rough, and washing with a heavy swing upon the beach. The ancient mariner is afoot early this morning, and is hobbling about the passages of the house ready to waylay anybody. 'How do you do, sir? Shake hands, sir. You smoke a pipe, sir? I smoke a pipe with you, sir.' It was bad enough for the wedding-guest to lose his breakfast and the seat by the pretty bridesmaid; but to have an ancient mariner in the house to waylay you at every turn, and delay you for all your meals, is something infinitely worse. But the old mariner has real news this morning. There was a wreck in the night under the cliffs beyond Cape la Hève; and we hie away to the cliffs to see if we can make it out. The storm has levelled all the telegraph-posts, and blown down the wall of the *tir*, the rifle-range of Havre, and done general havoc among trees and shrubs. But we walk along the edge of the cliff for some miles before we reach the wreck. And then we come to a group of men and boys standing on the verge of the cliff, and peering into the abyss. There, sure enough, three hundred feet or so below us, is a black thing, in shape like the deck of a ship, with jagged stumps sticking out, the sea all awash over it, sometimes covering it from sight in sheets of foam. Along the rough boulders at the foot of the cliff, scattered like spillikens, or a box of matches thrown heedlessly down, is a tangled mass of masts, spars, and rigging. Manikins, like flies, are crawling here and there, and by their blue garments we recognise them for people of the country busily at work among the wreckage. But her crew were saved, it seems. The *douaniers*, always on the watch, had lowered ropes from the cliffs, and the seamen had crawled to safety. She was an English brig from the Mediterranean, loaded with oil; the empty casks are now being tossed about by the waves. But the oil had no effect on the troubled waters; they raged just as badly after the application as before.

This upland country—that stretches from these high cliffs inland, well cultivated and diversified with groves of trees chiefly elms, groves in appearance, though

they are really planted in a square about the farmstead and buildings —is pleasant and well cultivated, though rather tame and monotonous. The cultivation is in long strips, without hedges or other enclosures. No permanent pasture, the cows are tethered on the clover and other fodder by a chain passing across the horns to a stake of pointed iron; these have to be shifted every two hours or so, an employment that generally falls to the lot of the farmers' daughters. Here are two buxom peasant-lasses, armed with huge wooden mallets, who are about to shift the cows. I try to get a sketch of girl and cow, but the lass divines my purpose and shyly hides behind the cow. An amiable game of hide-and-seek ensues, but at last the girl, blushing, submits to have her charms portrayed. A ploughman driving the clumsy Norman plough, in shape like a grasshopper on wheels, stops at the end of his furrow, and looks on with an amiable grin. I level my book at him, and he hastily starts his team and decamps. 'We shall find ourselves in Paris just now,' he cries to the girl in parting.

Everywhere this plateau is dotted with farmsteads, each sheltered by its bank and ditch in a square enclosure, about which are growing rows of tall trees. Within the enclosure are the farmhouse and the buildings, some of the picturesque black-and-white timber construction, others built of flint with bonding courses of yellow brick, mostly with thatched roofs. In the centre is the orchard, and there too is a draw-well, with a penthouse cover and a huge wheel for bucket and chain. It is the Pays de Caux, this chalky table-land, and the character of the country is the same pretty nearly for all its extent, which is from the Château of Eu on the river Bresle to Havre on the Seine, and almost conterminous with the modern department of Seine Inférieure. When you have seen a piece of it you have seen it all, and may rule it off in your traveller's note-book as done and made an end of. It is the edges of this country which abound in charming scenery, and may be made the scene of innumerable pleasant rambles.

IV.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF FLUELLEN.

When we left England we intended spending a month or six weeks in some quiet place on the Norman coast, there to keep our head-quarters during the whole of our holiday. We are pleased with St. Adresse; for we have pleasant scenery and quiet country life within reach, while close at hand is the stir and animation of a large town. The ancient mariner is rather a bore, but we may hope that he will grow tired of shaking hands with us in time. Anyhow, here we will pitch our camp for a while.

There is an old rattletrap omnibus that starts from a tobacco-shop in the Rue de Paris at Havre, and passes through Harfleur to Montivilliers: it starts every hour. A fine autumn morning sees us in the *banquette* of this conveyance, jogging along at a sensible easy pace that enables us to notice all the objects of interest on the road. After a drive of about a mile the houses of Havre give place to the country, and we find ourselves skirting the northern bank of the Seine. The river flows on our right in a broad bright stream; a flat of meadows and salt marshes lies between, bordered with willows,

poplars, and wispy elms. Beyond the silvery streak are the hills about Honfleur. We are driving at the foot of rough broken heights of reddish chalky sand, well wooded, with white villas and pavilions shining out. Presently we pass the Abbey of Graville with a fine Romanesque church, which you may read all about in the guide-book. By the way, on the subject of guide-books, 'Joanne' is far the best to any part of France. Certainly to Normandy none of our English guide-books come near him. There is one circumstance about Graville which Joanne, however, does not mention; for Henry V. took up his residence there during the siege of Harfleur. Soon the spire of Harfleur itself shows at the end of a long vista of white dusty road, tall and elegant, with crotchets sticking out like the split almonds in a cake. Then we pull up at a white *café*.

A lazy tranquil village is Harfleur, dominated by its tall florid spire that has something English in its look, like Grantham, perhaps, or Newark. Times have changed very much with it since the days when its placid river was crowded with shipping, and Genoese, Portuguese, Spanish, and English thronged its quays. And that an English king should bring an army to capture this insignificant place seems quite incredible. But if you take a stroll round the outskirts of the village to the eastward, you come to the old town-ditch, with remains of crumbling walls and shattered towers, devoted now to market-gardening purposes, which show a wide and imposing *enceinte*. The importance of Harfleur was in a great measure factitious and artificial. Nature never designed it for a great port, and the efforts of the French kings in that direction were never very successful. It was at the end of the thirteenth century that the French king installed himself at Harfleur, bought up all the fiefs which hindered the full possession of the town, and had the port dug out and fortified. The object was to hold the key of the mouth of the Seine, and to keep a check upon the turbulent and almost independent city of Rouen, where the royal power had often but a feeble hold. The same policy led to the creation of Havre as a sea-port in the sixteenth century by Francis I. It was as a royal and sovereign port, then, that our Henry V. attacked it in the year 1415—the siege memorable to us as Shakespeare's siege of Harfleur. It could have been barely defensible, even against the imperfect artillery of those days, as the walls, and indeed the port and whole town, are commanded by heights adjacent, from which the English were able in safety to discharge their huge stone bullets into the town. And these stone bullets, curiously enough, are almost the only relics existing of the English siege. You may see some of them adorning the garden-wall of the Mairie—a delightfully quaint and shady little place that is worth a visit.

Passing out of Harfleur on the way to Montivilliers there is no trace of walls or bastions; our omnibus rattles unconcernedly over the site where Henry rallied his soldiers to the attack. 'Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more.' 'Twas a favourite passage in Enfield's *Speaker;* and I remember to have recited it more than once — not without applause.

We drive up the quiet placid valley of the Lezarde. The country reminds us of Suffolk, only the meadow-flats by the

river are wider and the valleys more extended. The road is excellent; indeed France has made enormous strides in the matter of roads under the second Empire—give everybody his due—and is far ahead of England with its cumbrous antiquated highway system. One admires, too, the huge Norman hay-carts, each bearing a stack of hay between its two huge wheels. Its shafts are like the masts of a ship, and the load is piled into the air till it resembles a moving mountain, and yet so accurately poised that the shaft-horse hardly feels the weight. And the teams—the white, round-barrelled, clean-legged horses stepping out proudly under their trappings. First there are the hames, of wood gaily painted in blue, and adorned with brass nails, the ends sticking out like a cross upon the neck; then above the collar, often simply of twisted straw, is a handsome sheepskin dyed blue, and the loins are covered with blue horse-cloths adorned with embroidery in crimson. Red rosettes, too, ornament all the crossings of the harness, a huge plume of horsehair depends from the leader's collar, and the head-stalls are hung with *grelots*. The wagons have as much machinery and trapping about them as if they were on the march from farthest Scythia: breaks, ladders, hanging sledges, and a box of carpenters' tools for repairs. The only private vehicle popular is the *cabriolet* with its old-fashioned hood, holding only two; and you may go from one end of Normandy to the other without meeting a man on horseback. But everything is fertile and prosperous-looking: the cattle well fed and comfortable, the people stout and sleek, the fields green and fertile. One or two *châteaux*, white modern buildings, are perched among secular trees; but the general air is of a contented prosperous people who make honey for their own hives, and are not much troubled with superiors.

Montivilliers is composed principally of *cafés*, with some good picturesque houses of the sixteenth century here and there. The church of the at one time abbey dominates the market-place. It was an *abbaye*, by the way, a female abbey, and the lady abbess was of old one of the greatest ladies in France. When Harfleur flourished as a port, Montivilliers flourished as a manufacturing town; but its trade was declining when the revocation of the Edict of Nantes gave a final blow to it by driving away most of its manufacturers and artisans, who were chiefly of the Protestant faith.

A toothsome *fricandeau* and a bottle of good light wine at the Hôtel de Normandie, opposite the church—the only fault of the banquet is too much flies—disposes us to take a more cheerful view of Montivilliers. The tower of the church blinks down pleasantly upon us, a single handsome western tower of transitional character, and a row of limes that conceal part of the *façade* of the church rustle pleasantly in the breeze. A trim nice-looking *bonne* is in attendance, and pours out our coffee. She has been 'to Londres, ah, yes;' in the time of the war, with a fugitive family from the neighbourhood.

Let us think of the days of the jolly abbess of Montivilliers as they are portrayed for us by the Marquise de Crequi:

'When I was between seven and nine,' says the Marchioness, 'I was taken in a litter to the abbey of my aunt, who had just left her monastery of Cordylon, diocese of Bayeux, to succeed

Princess Mary of Gonzague in the government of this noble and powerful church of Montivilliers, which counts not less than 128 lordly spires, submissive to its cross and dependent on its sovereign tower. After the Princess of Guenienée and the abbess of Frontevrauld, the abbess of Montivilliers is assuredly the greatest lady in France. There was at the abbey a brood of young women —[These are the nuns, if you please.]—clothed all alike in serge of the same colour, and who were always ranged together, like the pipes in an organ-loft, as they were proud young creatures brought up out of charity, and as, moreover, they were silly creatures they were hardly ever admitted to the little court of madame.'

'The number of *religieuses*,' says Monsieur Morlent (*Normandie Pittoresque*), 'Benedictines belonging to the abbey, was forty-five. Two only have survived the shipwreck of the Revolution; and although old age has well-nigh obliterated all their recollections, they still—1840—recount with great precision the circumstances of the invasion of their convent by the men of '93, and the terror which they inspired by their long pikes and red caps.'

The austere rules of conventual life did not weigh much upon the abbess, who freed from their incidence certain favourites composing her little court. These ladies drove about in their carriages, and often directed their drives towards a little pavilion some way upon the road to Harfleur. There they were accustomed to alight and spend some pleasant hours under the cool shade of trees no longer existent. The site has still preserved the name of 'La Chenée de Madame l'Abesse.'

V.

THE WRECK ASHORE.

The other day, taking a walk in a Norman valley by a charming stream set in green meadows, we came to a mill, the waters pleasantly thundering under the wheel, and diffusing a refreshing coolness around. But a violent ringing disturbed the quietude of the scene—the ringing of a domestic kind of bell, as if all the housemaids of the *commune* were being summoned in a hurry. By the way, I don't suppose there was a single house-bell in the *commune;* I have not come across one yet in the course of my wanderings. The miller was taking his *goutte* and playing his dominoes in the *café* opposite; the bell signified that there was no more grist in the hopper, and that he must come back and set to work. A similar bell has been ringing in my ears, audible only to myself, for some time. There is a want of grist, and I am very unwillingly trying to supply it. An evening placid and fine; the sun going down gloriously into the sea, spread tranquilly before me. Down below the green of the pear-trees is dashed with amber, the fruit showing crimson and gold between. The ancient mariner looks well after his pears; he is constantly on the watch, and rushing out after the children, whom he suspects of designs upon the fruit. He has also a tender care for his cats—he has three or four pampered brutes, who are always at war with the children, a contest in which the mariner rather unjustly interferes, always on the side of the cats. The dimpling sea; the brown and purple coastline opposite; the sails, some tinged with the glow of sunset, others dark and gloomy; the pleasant scene, with the murmur of

voices; the soft tinkle of the *grelots* of passing carriages, and the musical cadence of street-cries —these do not dispose the soul for work. A dead brick-wall and a row of melancholy chimney-pots above are the better *entourage* for that. But by degrees I do contrive to screw my soul into the end of my fingers.

Your mind, we will say, is something like a pond, and you an artist, bound to delineate, not the actual scene about you, but its reflection in the water, and for that you must have it perfectly tranquil. Against this tranquillity all Nature seems at war. Just as the pool is beginning to show the landscape reflected in its bosom, a mischievous little urchin throws a pebble—ripples everywhere and bewildering dancing forms. Then it is a waterhen, and then a shower of rain; and now a breeze, and now the big jack pursuing the smaller fry. But calm is coming at last, spreading itself over the pool. And then a thundering big stone crashes into the very middle, and turning round in bitter indignation, behold the culprit is a young woman.

In this case it was my wife who put her foot into the middle of my web.

'Pack up your papers, and come down-stairs directly; early to-morrow morning everything in the house will be seized!'

There is no doubt about the fact. The house Beauvoisin is in a state of collapse. The ancient mariner has found his way to the sharks. To-morrow everything will be seized. The landlord is down upon him; the administration is pursuing him for contributions; his creditors in general are swooping upon him. *Ma poulette*, whose poor grimy face has been partially cleansed by tears, hopes indeed feebly, wiping her eyes, 'that all may yet be well;' but her hopes have no outward foundation. How will our own belongings fare in the *mêlée?* Can the landlord detain our things? Who can say? At all events, when once the *huissier* walks into the house, there will be a difficulty in getting away. Let us take time by the forelock, and get away before he comes.

Follows a time of bustle and confusion. Everybody is packing-up all over the house. Ourselves, a family occupying the first-floor; the Beauvoisins, too, are dragging things about, trying to save sundry cherished possessions. Among it all the ancient mariner totters feebly about, takes off his cap,—'How do you do, sir? You smoke a pipe, sir,'—but in a feeble ghost-like way.

At daybreak next morning everybody is astir. A subdued murmur of preparation echoes through the house. *Ma poulette* is working for her life to get everything neat and clean. There is something Roman about the old lady. She will give up the ghost with her saucepans all bright, her *casseroles* scoured out; when the neighbours come in to make a prey of her household gods, they shall be all adorned and ready for the sacrifice. It is a nervous moment when the *fiacre* drives up to the garden-gate, and the driver surveys the huge pile of luggage doubtfully. Perhaps he is a creditor too, and hopes to swell his dividend with our belongings. Everything is quiet and calm; but for all that there may be a *commissaire priseur* lurking round the corner. But a good *pourboire* in prospect, that animates the doubtful cabman. In a few moments our goods are on board, and the *fiacre* drives heavily away to the station. At last we breathe freely. Come on, ye myrmidons of the law!

And now that we are once more in motion, we are no longer content to settle down in the same neighbourhood. We have had enough of the coast; let us try some quiet inland place, where we may come in contact with real unadulterated country life. Still it is difficult to choose on the spur of the moment. Half way between Havre and Rouen is a station called Yvetot. The name is familiar to us in connection with that *chanson* of Béranger. Let us take refuge in the kingdom of Yvetot. But as we contrive to miss the early train in that direction, we return to the house Beauvoisin, to see how it has sped with them.

Alas, Fate and the Law have swooped down upon the unfortunate household! Before we reach the outer *grille*, we find outside on the pavement sundry *dépôts* of the late household goods of the Beauvoisins. The best bedstead, the clock that adorned our room, are in the clutches of a savage in the way of a broker, who scowls upon us as we brush against him. All the garden is littered with the wreckage of a home; the cherished pear-trees are plashed and beaten down; the golden fruit the prey of prowling *gamins;* the cats have fled, who knows where? A sallow man in a broad-brimmed straw hat stands upon the little green bench, a cigar in his mouth, knocking everything down in hot haste. The house is being turned inside out and pitched through the windows. Around the auctioneer's table sit a row of hard-featured people of the broker and vulture order, who greet the appearance of each new lot with derisive laughter. Behind this favoured row of critics presses a motley crowd — blue-bloused men, all with cigarettes in their mouths; women in white mob-caps and bedgowns; loafers of various kinds. A bloated pasty youth, also smoking hard, sits at one end of the table, and books everything that is sold. '*Un franc, deux francs;* what will anybody give for this excellent *casserole?*' Within the house you may hear heavy-footed men tearing down this and that, and generally making a clean sweep. The ancient mariner is not to be seen. Rumour has it that he has been put to bed in the *grenier*, with all the feather-beds in the house beneath him, and the whole of the family bedding on the top of him. They will leave a sick man the bed he lies upon in France. The females of the house are trotting about composed and quite cheerful. Suspense is the worst suffering; and now the world, such as it is, poor things, is before them.

VI.

FROM KINGDOM TO REPUBLIC.

A VERY intelligent and accomplished Frenchman of my acquaintance has come to despair of his country since the German war, and goes so far as to say that France is doomed to be partitioned, like Poland—split up into its original elements. In that case, if any of those to whom these presents may come should be offered the kingdom of Yvetot, I advise them to decline it, unless on the condition of non-residence. I had as soon live at Basingstoke. Ineffable dulness haunts its white chalky ways. It is inhabited by M. the Sous-Préfet, M. the Président of the Tribunal Civil, the Administration generally; but they remain religiously shut up in their cream-coloured houses, with green *persiennes:* there is not even a dog to bark at you. You see a few priests creeping

about: there is a great seminary of theirs here, but they take nothing from the solemn stillness of the scene. The church is generally acknowledged to be the ugliest in France. The market-place presents a melancholy appearance—cut up with rows of fixed booths, occupied, some of them, as old rag-and-bone shops. Happy we are to hear that it contains no accommodation whatever for strangers. There is a *diligence* from here to Caudebec, a little town of which we hear good accounts, and thither we will fare. The *diligence* is but a faint reminiscence of the old-fashioned vehicle of that name—a mere omnibus slightly modified, retaining its ancestral characteristics of *coupé* and *banquette*. We are in the Pays de Caux, as you may see; the same slightly-undulating country, well cultivated and fertile, with its groves of enclosing trees. This autumn time, now that the harvest is gathered in, the great cultivated plain looks bare and cheerless; but in spring and summer, when the varied crops are in full luxuriance, it must be pleasant enough. Great stacks of wheat are built in the middle of the fields; here and there peers a church-spire and the white houses of a hamlet; the ploughmen are busy driving their long furrows, the horses, with their trappings of red and blue, giving a little warmth to the scene. The road is as straight as a foot-rule for nearly five miles, and bordered by tall poplars, the tops of which, seen in perspective by the dim twilight, resemble great wafts of smoke, as if from two monstrous locomotives running a race. Presently we come to a little settlement—a blacksmith's forge and a roadside *café*, and the dark shadows of the forest now creep up on either hand. This is Maulevrier, once the great feudal stronghold of these parts. The ruined castle—not to be seen from the road, of which there only remain a few broken walls hidden in foliage, but enclosed by a vast fosse—has still a bad name among the neighbouring peasants. There is of course a subterranean passage, leading no one knows where, and a door just ajar that nobody can open. The *curé* tried it once—not this one—armed with his breviary and a blessed candle. It opened for him, but slammed-to again with a tremendous bang; the candle went out, and the *curé* found himself on the ground; luckily he had kept hold of his book, and was none the worse. This story was told me by an enthusiastic little carpenter, who declared that he was perfectly well acquainted with the passage in question. He would be most happy to be my guide at some future time. From this point the road descends rapidly, winding through the forest; the air becomes fresher and cooler, and through the darkness we hear the ripple of a stream. Lights begin to shine through the trees; and by and by, in the gray indistinct landscape, appears a broad shining strip as of clear sky. It is the Seine, whose banks we are now rapidly approaching. The *diligence* gives a sudden turn, comes rattling upon the stones; then it draws up with a jerk under an avenue of trees. A lamp is tied by a cord round the stem of one of these trees, and by its light we discern a little group of idlers, curiously regarding the newcomers. We are guided through a courtyard full of carts, horses, *cabriolets*. A pleasant-looking hostess in a white cap advances to greet us. We are made welcome to the Hôtel de la Marine at Caudebec.

Our advent is marked by a catastrophe. There is a raised step in the corridor, unseen in the semi-darkness. One of the youngsters tumbles over it, and discloses to the natives the capabilities of a good British yell. Passages and staircases are paved with tiles. After the usual bewildering interval attending a first arrival, when one waits for everything and nothing comes, we descend to the *salle à manger*, where a party of *commis-voyageurs* are beginning again the long-finished *table-d'hôte* dinner, drinking great draughts of cider, talking and gesticulating, their voices thick with *potage* and *fricandeau*.

We wander out by the riverside, invisible at first in the general gloom. But we can hear its soft ripples. A vessel is anchored in the stream; its lamp throws a long pencil of light on the water. Soft half lights appear—gray neutral tints; a perfect calm and quiet everywhere. High in the air is a fiery cross; red lights, with a green centre—rather bewildering; not stars, certainly, and not railway lights. It is the *marégraph*—lights exhibited on a high flagstaff, telling the state of the tide.

Morning reveals the general features of Caudebec en Caux. A broad crescent-shaped reach of the river stretches before us as we stand on the neat little quay, shut in on either hand by wooded heights. In front is a broad green prairie, studded with lofty poplars and clumps of willows, backed by a range of low dark hills, the forest of Brotonne. Behind us a range of white-and-yellow houses, with *persiennes*, over which rises the spire of the church and a range of gently-swelling hills. Along the quay a few small river-craft are unloading in a lazy intermittent way. A white-sailed stone-boat is tacking aimlessly to and fro, and the fussy little *bac à vapeur*, the steam ferry-boat, is bringing over its freight of blue blouses and white mob-caps, with a gig and a *cabriolet* and a huge high-piled hay-cart.

Behind the white cheerful river-frontage are narrow tortuous streets, with fine old timber houses projecting story over story—quaint gables cunningly carved, oaken doorways, and dark-shaded courts where the sun hardly penetrates. The church, a fine florid building, with a noble clock-tower, rises high above the market-place. This happens to be the *fête* of the Virgin, and the river ecclesiastical is in full spate. Candles, incense, gold-embroidered robes; the altar with all its best things on; a deep-voiced priest booming out the mass, and taking snuff at intervals; organ and choir responding with loud barbaric clamour. The effect is imposing for a few moments, especially when you reflect on the uninterrupted way in which all this has gone on for centuries on this self-same spot, while generations of men have perished and kingdoms have risen and decayed. But a little of this goes a long way with us. It is like that fine old tawny port, the flavour of which is delightful to our senses, but which austere experience assures us—and our friends are only too zealous in reminding us of it—will play the very deuce with our constitution.

But this Caudebec grows upon one. Here we mean to stay for the rest of our holiday. But the inhabitants of the town are not anxious to encourage the idea. Furnished rooms to let seemed to be unheard-of things. Achates, who has a fine faith in established institutions, and loves to warm himself in the sunshine of official recognition, declares that the *curé* of the parish is the proper person

to appeal to, and he makes a call at the gloomy *presbytère*, where he is civilly received by the tall sardonic-looking *curé*, who gives no hope, however. He believes the thing utterly impracticable. The Church having failed him, Achates tries the State. He pays a visit to the *gendarmerie*, and an imposing individual in a terrific cocked hat is detailed to aid him in the search. Still with the same want of result. We did not think of the *juge de paix*, who knows everybody's business, and is generally courteous and accessible. Finally, when Achates, dispirited and fagged, owns himself beaten, the wives volunteer. They will make a final search by themselves, unencumbered by masculine maladroitness.

At the farther end of the quay is a pleasant double avenue of elms, with benches beneath, where we sit and smoke while our wives are lodging-hunting. Evening is coming on, and we are yet homeless. The hotel is comfortable enough, and reasonable in its charges; but that which is cheap enough for one, mounts up alarmingly when multiplied by five or six. Then the womenfolk return triumphantly. They have found an empty house, and the proprietor is going to furnish it for us, and for two hundred francs a month. It is a tall house of three stories, of a somewhat harlequin aspect—one of the old timber houses transformed by plaster and paint. It is empty, and echoes drearily to our footsteps; but it is to be ready for our occupation by noon to-morrow.

At the time appointed we enter our new house. The proprietor has done wonders in the time. There are many things wanting, but the place is habitable; and it is market-day to-morrow, when all kinds of provisions can be had.

On market-days Caudebec assumes a totally different aspect from its ordinary one. The butchers' shops are open and full of meat; all the shopkeepers are on the alert; in long rows by the roadside are ranged all kinds of strange conveyances on wheels. Pigs squeak and grunt in a little side market at the entrance to the town; horses and cattle are shown in a space just outside the old town-wall. The fish-people have a street to themselves. But the principal market (that for poultry, butter, eggs, and vegetables) is held in the grand square, under the church. Great is the babble here, as from a school when all the children are learning their lessons. There is no wheeled traffic to break into the busy hum, the cheerful clatter of human voices—pleasant, but bewildering. Stout old Norman dames in white caps sit placidly behind their stalls while their customers chaffer and cheapen. Rows of women, with baskets covered with snow-white cloths, stand expectant of buyers for their butter and eggs. Close under the church is the poultry-market. Fowls scream and flutter, philosophic ducks survey with bright observant eyes proceedings in which, if they knew it, they have a vital interest. The market-collector slips about, collecting his dues and marking the handles of the baskets with a streak of red chalk. A dealer from Paris has established himself in one corner, and is making a great pile of eggs, buying up basketful after basketful. He will buy anything, this man, at his own price—fowls and ducks, rabbits and turkeys, geese and guineafowl; his dark-eyed gipsy-looking wife counts and examines everything that comes in, and he stands in a lordly way and pays the price from a bag slung over his shoulder. Huge

yellow pumpkins and blushing melons, piles of grapes, baskets full of huge pears and rosy-cheeked apples, adorn the stalls; and the passages between are cumbered with heaps of cabbages, *bottes* of crimson carrots, crisp endives, lettuces, and prim artichokes. Here are the cream-cheeses of the country, and creamier ones from the Pays du Bray—land of fat pastures and brimming milk-pails. Along the quay are stalls of mercers, of haberdashers and hosiers; the dyer, too, is there with samples of renovated fabrics, and the quack medicine-vendor under a huge red umbrella. A hoary old scamp in a corner crows out loose songs to a crowd of grinning peasants, and sells yellow books of the same, but more decent than the sample.

And now the diligence comes in from Yvetot, crowded with a consignment of country visitors, for to-morrow is the great *fête* of the canton, and our country cousins are crowding in to see it. Comfortable-looking people, well dressed and hard featured; a sprinkling of the religious among them—nuns in their hideous head-gear; a young priest, whose bristling chin and full sensuous face agree little with the air of devout abstraction that custom enjoins upon him.

Economy is a goddess, who flies as one pursues her. There is no marvellous cheapness at the market at Caudebec. Everything is changed since the war, say lamenting housekeepers. To live in English fashion here will cost you rather more than in England. But if you make up your mind to follow the way of living of the country, narrow means will go a long way farther here.

VII.

THE 'FETE DU PAYS.'

Early morning, some time between five and six. I am leaning out of my *grenier* window, a panoramic view of the Seine valley before me. It is hazy at present, the river lost in mist, only the tops of the wooded heights appearing like islands in a vapoury sea. The sun, a blob of brightness showing through dappled clouds, is now well above the horizon; the mist begins to break and fly. Everywhere the vapours wreathe and twine among the tall poplars and over the green plain; the dark forest beyond looms through them like a cloud; they curl over the dimpling river, where a steamer, lazily paddling down the stream, is reflected in soft trembling lines. The steamer leaves a long oily track behind her, and disappears; and now distant heights begin to show themselves over the mists and waters. The town below is thinking about getting up. The neat little sempstress who occupies the top room opposite has just opened her window, and busies herself in arranging her chamber. Her black-and-white cat, who has spent the night abroad, now promenading homewards delicately over the rough stones, greets her with a plaintive mew, and she hurls affectionate reproaches at his head. Pigeons sun themselves on the ridges. Women with baskets full of vegetables from the country begin to drop in. Caudebec feasts its friends this day, and the *pot au feu* will simmer and the *cafetière* bubble all day long. Monsieur, who occupies the neat little cream-coloured mansion below, with the white jalousies and the tiny three-cornered garden gay with roses and geraniums—monsieur has just risen, and comes out in his shirt-

sleeves to sniff the morning air and exchange *bonjours* with the neighbours. He has already secured his supply of vegetables, which lie in a pleasant-looking bundle—pink, white, and green—by the gateway. Our friend means a feast evidently; for behold, in the dormer-window of his *grenier*, suspended from the hook and pully, is a bird of the Indies, with outstretched denuded wings and pallid naked breast. The pigeons, too, must suffer for it, those placid amiable pigeons that flutter down to his call. See, he has caught one, and cuts its throat with a penknife, sweetly smiling the while, and chatting amicably with the early sempstress.

A salute of three guns announces the opening of the *fête*, and by the time the first breakfast is over a brass band bursts forth into melody. Forthwith the whole population is upon the quay. The river-front is gaily decked with flags—an avenue of Venetian masts; the trees are hung with coloured lamps, and the *gamins* watch with interest the preparations for the evening's fireworks. There is a little wooden stand for the 'jury' and the brass band, in front of which is the little brass gun that furnishes almost the sole excitement of the *régates*. For everybody is too much occupied in talking to everybody else to pay much heed to the boat-races. The river is speckled with white sails, tacking to and fro; boats shoot up and down; the brass gun speaks out; the talk is hushed for a moment; something has started or somebody has won, which, it may be, nobody knows or cares. The shops are all open, but the people who keep them go out and come in when they like, and regard the sale of their goods as part of the pleasures of the day. Then begin the 'sports,' more attractive to the general public than anything aquatic. The progress of science has been brought to bear on ancient horseplay. There is a bowl of electric fish upon a platform, and competitors who seek to pull them out are rewarded with electric shocks that send them away grimacing, till one appears impervious to magnetic influences, who wins a silver watch by his callousness. Then, in lieu of the old-fashioned sack-race, we have a competition of blindfolded men, each armed with a huge squirt, who at word of command are marched towards a lighted candle, which it is their aim to extinguish. When the halt is sounded the line is fronting all ways, and at the word 'fire' the squirts are discharged—into the face of the rear rank man, at the surrounding roaring crowd, anywhere as it may happen. Thus the day passes. As evening comes on the crowd increases, the *bac* is crowded with country people from the other side, the roads on the outskirts are lined with the uncouth vehicles of the *paysans*. When twilight comes on the coloured lamps under the elms are lighted up, fiddle and *cornet à piston* take their places, and dancing sets in—confined to the blue blouses and white caps—one eternal never-ending quadrille. They dance everything out, these peasants, with wonderful gravity and *empressement*.

Everything is gratuitous—the *commune* pays for all, even for the fireworks in the evening, which are really very good. At half-past ten under the elms the eternal quadrille is still going on; the fiddler, hoarse and limp, is calling out the figures in a husky gasping voice. His elbow still wags, but all its strength is gone. The fiddle has lost its voice with fatigue, and emits only occasionally a feeble

whine. The *cornet à piston*, too, is almost played out, blaring forth the beginning of a bar, and then silent. But the *paysans* are dancing away vigorously, music or no music. They squeeze their partners more firmly, they turn them with more of a swing, they set to them with rising fervour: we will leave them setting.

By midnight the town is wrapped in complete repose. No tipsy brawls disturb the night. Everybody has eaten and drunken his fill, but avoided the 'drop too much.'

VIII.

UP THE SEINE.

IMAGINE a fine broad river driven through the chalk-ranges of Kent and Surrey, hollowing out a noble basin, among swelling downs and white precipices, and there you have the scenery of the lower Seine. It is chalk, chalk always; but chalk that is changed, as it were, and glorified, presenting itself in many strange aspects. Sometimes it frowns in beetling cliffs, sometimes recedes in soft wood-covered downs; while, first on one hand, then on the other, you have a broad plain studded with willows and poplars. Pretty green islands appear in every reach, and white villages with quays and ferry-boats, or, at all events, a wooden landing-stage. Through this landscape, charming, if somewhat unvaried, the little steamer Furet, bound to Rouen from Havre, passes swiftly along, taking up and setting down passengers by means of boats from the shore, heavy, and shaped like sauce-boats.

The steamer is well loaded already. In the fore-part people of the country; the part behind the funnel is thronged with English tourists. Many of these last are ladies, mostly with their heads in Tauchnitz novels, seemingly anxious to detach themselves as far as possible from scenes that they are taking so much trouble to visit. When volume one is finished it is time for lunch. The white-capped *chef* is busy in his *cuisine*, three feet square, by the paddle-box. He would do wonders, no doubt, if he had anything to cook; but the meat has run out; they did not expect so many English, and— 'Well, fire a gun, and signal for fresh meat,' suggests an American. The cook smiles feebly, and goes on frying potatoes.

Time brings us to the broad quay of Rouen, with its half inland, half maritime air. Everybody knows the grand square of Rouen, the first *coup d'œil* of which is so taking, with the rich time-worn *façade* of the cathedral bursting suddenly upon the sight. But the interior of the cathedral is disappointing, mean and tame in its proportions and arrangement. Then there is St. Ouen, a very perfect model of a Gothic church, no doubt—correct as cardboard, and as uninteresting as a model under a glass case. And, except for its churches, one or two nice street-bits, and its really charming Hôtel de Bourgthéroulde—an admirable specimen of the town-mansion of a *grand seigneur* of the sixteenth century—what is there to see at Rouen? As for Joan of Arc, granted that she was burnt somewhere in the town, not a single stone or timber stands as it did then. There is much still to reward a painstaking lover of antiquity, no doubt; but to a passing tourist Rouen offers little inducement for a lengthened stay. Old Rouen, the quaint mediæval town, has disappeared almost entirely, and in its place

you have a bustling modern town, developing itself in a way that is highly satisfactory to those interested in its progress, but not specially interesting to us.

The *table d'hôte* of the Hôtel d'Angleterre is crowded, of course, chiefly with English and Americans. There is the nice golden-haired girl, with the pretty but angular face and tall slight figure; the young man she made happy not so long since; the cross Englishman, who abuses his patient wife in an undertone; the American colonel, who knows where you can get everything, and what are the strong points of every hotel *cuisine* on the Continent; the fast young woman with the towy hair and sodden complexion, who never takes slops, but not more than a pint of champagne at a time—nothing else agrees with her,—all these are homely and familiar. Less so the group opposite—the professorial-looking man in spectacles, his bright intelligent wife, and their son—the young private of *chasseurs*, who is doing his year's *voluntariat*. They are not particularly proud of the blue-and-brickdust uniform, but neither are they ashamed of it. But when, in the middle of his *potage* and a simultaneous animated talk with father and mother, he has to spring to his feet, his napkin round his neck, while a supercilious beetle-browed officer walks up the room to his place, one must fancy he feels the chains of discipline a little galling.

In one thing Rouen has changed not a jot from the days of yore. When William the Conqueror lay a-dying there, the noise and chatter of the people was so great that his attendants carried him away to a neighbouring convent to die in peace. The Rouennais are just as noisy as ever. All through the night the chatter and gabble went on. The people sleep and watch in relays, one would think, that there may be no break in the continual din. Hot, noisy, dirty, dear—if those qualities delight you, pitch your tent in Rouen.

The air, too, of the city is depressing and relaxing. It is shut in by an amphitheatre of hills—a basin formed by sundry converging valleys. Squeezed in between hills and river, the town has expanded upon the river-flat opposite, and formed a quarter bearing the same relation to Rouen as Southwark to London, or Salford to Manchester. A broad boulevard surrounds the town, following the line of its once-fortified *enceinte*, and mounting the heights to the north. There it forms a nice promenade, shaded with trees, and furnished with comfortable benches.

It is quite enchanting here under the limes, the city beneath us frizzling in the sunshine, children playing about us, small groups of soldiers going through their exercises in a leisurely way. They are learning to handle the *chassepot*—or, it may be, the *gros fusil*—these children of France; but the occupation assumes a peaceful and tranquil aspect under these grateful shades. One recalls the hot dusty barrack-square, the dour red-headed Scotch sergeant, the mechanic evolutions of the awkward squad, and one is obliged to confess that the lot of the French soldier is the more endurable. Their drill finished, the warriors pile arms with alacrity, and mix themselves with the other children at their games. Here is one soldier who can do wonders with the pegtop—can make it jump, dance, spring into his hand from the ground. A comrade, not to be outdone, bor-

rows another pegtop from a boy. 'V'là!' he cries, as he discharges the toy from his hand. It spins merrily enough, but the wrong side uppermost. Loud derisive laughter follows from all the world, and the foolish boastful soldier loses himself in confusion among his comrades. See, a man of another corps approaches—of the artillery. In a moment we rob him of his cap with friendly violence; it is placed on the ground, bottom uppermost, as a mark for the skilful pegtopist. Once, twice, he misses; but the third time he makes his *coup*, and the unfortunate artillery-cap jumps about as if possessed by a demon. Universal laughter follows—we all laugh: boys and girls and soldiers; the baker's man, who has strolled up here for a pipe under the trees; the fat washerwoman, who rests her basket of whitened linen on the benches; your tired travellers, who are discussing their frugal luncheon,—all laugh out joyously.

Then a cloud comes over the scene, and everything looks gloomy and threatening for a while. A funeral toils slowly up the hill. The soldiers are marched off to the *caserne*. The children disappear to school or elsewhere. Presently some curious-looking functionaries approach, like *sergents de ville* all in black; one of them has a sword by his side, and, we are told, is the chief *commissaire* of interments. Even the dead must do their drill in France, it seems.

We make our way up the hill to obtain a general *coup d'œil* of the ground. Here are two cemeteries higher up, and the rest of the hill is thickly set with villas and *pavillons*, newly-built for the most part. Here, as at Havre, everything seems flourishing and prosperous.

As the day declines, we return towards the town, meeting a constant stream of visitors to the cemetery, who come to perform their *deuil* with cheerful alacrity. Five o'clock finds us on the top of the *diligence*, for Caudebec, in the Place Henri Quatre. This is something like a *diligence*, with its numerous compartments, its huge leathern hood and arched roof of tarpaulin. We start with five horses bravely enough, and rattle up the hill in good style. Here a turn of the road reveals a scene that will dwell always in one's memory.

The sun is now low on the horizon, and the valley behind us is filled with glowing light; the river, with its sinuous folds studded with green islands, is like a mirror of burnished gold, in which everything is reflected: the grand cathedral, stone for stone and pinacle for pinacle; the clustering dwellings; the fairy tracery of the shipping,—it is an enchanted valley full of sweet illusions.

Our driver, a portly ruddy fellow with a face that glows like a full moon in a fog, is full of kind solicitude for our comfort; he leans back every now and then, abandoning the horses to their own guidance, to explain the objects of interest on the road. It is to madame that we owe this consideration, and who has enlisted the sympathies of this honest man. '*Madame se trouve-t-elle bien?*' he is constantly turning to ask, in a most insinuating voice.

The route from Rouen to Caudebec is very pleasant. The road winds from one wooded valley to another, cutting off a great bend of the Seine; and as you approach the river once more at Duclair, the scenery takes a form almost grand. At one point the road descends a narrow pass with precipitous rocks overhanging, in

which the chalk assumes the rugged massive appearance of the earlier rocks. One projecting mass, our driver informs us, is called the Chair of Gargantua. About the legend, if there be any connected with him, our driver is ignorant; but he informs us that he was a giant and a *gaillard*, and used to sit there, as in a *fauteuil*, with an arm on either rock. About Duclair, too, the rock is hollowed extensively into caves, used sometimes for stabling and sometimes for habitations. The sight of these abodes of the troglodytes peering out here and there is quaint and striking, and reminds one of similar abodes in the limestone rocks of Inkerman, in the Crimea. At Duclair we lose our pleasant archaic *diligence*, and are transferred to an ordinary omnibus. Dusky twilight comes on, veiling all the landscape. At 'le Trait' we change omnibuses again, but this time without descending: one bus is driven up alongside the other, and the passengers scramble across while the baggage is transferred piecemeal. Here too we lose our sympathetic moon-faced driver, who drives on to the ferry, and crosses the river with passengers and baggage to another *diligence* which awaits him on the opposite side. The stoppages are numerous by our *diligence*. Passengers descend, and long searches are made for their baggage by the light of a lantern on the roof. Parcels are demanded, and everything is turned over to find some missing box or bundle. But everybody is patient here, and time of no importance. At last the welcome lights of Caudebec appear, and the end of our drive is reached.

IX.

THE MASCARET.

It would never do to leave Caudebec without seeing the *barre* or *mascaret*. It is the thing for which we are famous, and people come from far and near to see it. Unfortunately the conditions under which it is at its grandest are not those to attract visitors. A rousing gale from the southwest, with rains and heavy floods coming down to meet it, will bring our *mascaret* roaring up the river, breaking up embankments, and carrying away buildings; giving quiet inland people a touch of the fury of the ocean.

To-night it is quiet enough: the moon at its full, and rising gloriously over the hills; the river sleeps like a tranquil pool, reflecting the silvery moonlight mingled with the last orange glow of sunset. There is not a sail to be seen, or a sign of movement on the river. It is dead low water, and nothing will any farther go. The flag is hauled down, and the lights are all put out: the river has given over business for the night.

And yet there is a glow of light from behind the curtains of the *marégraph*; the lamps are there all ready to be hauled up, and the men are standing by the halliards ready to haul them up. Then we we hear a hoarse whistle, and the little *bac à vapeur* shoots out from the shadow of the opposite bank, and puffs vigorously down the stream. The sound is the signal for some stir of life: capstans clink, oars grate in the rowlocks, and a little flotilla of small craft puts out and drops down the river. Then the town behind us begins to wake up, and make its appearance on the quay, and circulate under the elm-avenue. In full force too are the *gamins* chasing each other round the trees,

and making the night hideous with their shrill cries.

The *curé* is here stalking up and down in solitary dignity, the fat little sociable *vicaire*, the doctor with his pretty young wife. Comilfaut, too, is here from the *château*, with madame, the little Comilfauts, the tutor to look after the children, and the sturdy old *bonne* to take care of them all. The coquettish wife of the mercer is sure to be there, and also the pale handsome *modiste* with her *bon ami*. All the world of our town, in fact, and foreigners besides: a tall English girl in an Ulster, at whom the pale *modiste* stares, somewhat doubtful as to her sex; even the soft accents of Manhattan are not unheard by the river-side this night.

The air is soft and mild, although we are well on into chill October; but a thin white mist hangs over the lower reach of the river, and out of this white mist comes a low mysterious murmur, that soon grows louder and becomes a gruff roar. It is the voice of the Atlantic; the swill and slop of the ocean thundering between our river banks; the genie in a bottle sealed with the seal of Solomon, but reeving and roaring therein. On either bank appears a white curl of foam; the noise grows louder and louder, and soon a swift head of surf darts quickly along, dashes against the quay, and leaps high into the air; the bosom of the river swells; the wave passes on with a loud roar, wiping out the quiet tranquil stream where the stars were reflected in bright spangles.

Then criticism commences. The first leap of the wave upon the quay is the crucial point of the whole performance. A *flot* that does not 'mount' properly is looked upon as something of an imposture. But a series of reflex waves follow, some mounting as high as the first; when these break, as they do to-night, and fill the river-bed with foaming billows, like a stormy sea all of a sudden turned on, the effect in the moonlight is charming. The waves pass on; you may see them coursing each other up the river, flashing under the moonbeams, and to the rush and tumult succeeds a business-like procession of waters. The river is now flowing bank high with swift turbid current; and a stream that your little skiff might have grounded in five minutes ago might now carry a fleet on its bosom. The *bac* soon reappears, and the flotilla of small craft. They have ridden out the storm at a point where the waves are not felt so severely as here.

X.

SOME ANTIQUITIES.

RUINS are not congenial to the soil of France. Nobody really cares for them, and, indeed, their monastic ruins are hardly venerable enough as ruins to be really interesting. In England it is the contrast between the past and the present,—a far-off past abruptly sundered, leaving these old stones as solitary records of a submerged and abandoned world of faith and manners. But here the nests are yet warm, as it were; persons yet living might have known the last prior of Jumiéges for instance, or have taken a pinch out of the snuff-box of an ex-monk of St. Wandrille. And then monasticism in France came practically to an end, as far as any real vitality is concerned, in the sixteenth century; and on visiting a French abbey we are reminded, not of the Middle Ages,

vigorous and picturesque, but of the *fade abbés* and indifferent monks of the eighteenth century. And yet it is curious to see how the rigid old bones of the Gothic period stand out in gaunt prominence, while all the more modern structure has vanished away without leaving a trace.

The abbey of Jumiéges is placed upon a green and fertile peninsula formed by the Seine, and its two uncouth and barbarous western towers are conspicuous objects from the river. We had formed a vague idea of a pleasant picnic among the ruins, and had provided ourselves accordingly with a bottle of champagne in the basket to drink to the manes of the departed. But our disappointment was great when we found the place surrounded by high walls, and guarded with the care and caution of a prison. We are admitted first into a room like a police-cell, the door locked behind us. Then our names taken, we are warned not to do this or that, and finally we must follow our gaoler implicitly. It is private property, no doubt, and it is very good of the proprietor to give everybody access to the ruins. But for myself I had rather be excluded altogether than admitted under such conditions. And, indeed, Jumiéges is interesting only to the architect by profession, or amateur in church architecture, as a specimen of later Romanesque in its aspiring stage, when its builders strove to give it, all unsuccessfully, something of height and grace. In lack of any pleasant impressions of my own, I am tempted to follow Mr. Bouncer's example, and draw copiously upon the guide-book for a description of the abbey; but I forbear. And this chapter upon abbeys promises to be as barren as the famous one upon snakes in Iceland, unless St. Wandrille comes to our aid.

The abbey of St. Wandrille is at the distance of a short pleasant walk from Caudebec, lying in a wooded valley, with fertile clearings on the sides and beautiful broad meadows at the bottom, intersected by a clear bright stream. This stream and the twin one of Rançon, which joins it lower down, are tolerably well stocked with trout. It has been raining slightly all day; but has cleared up now, and the sun is going down in glory behind the woods, throwing a bridge of visible light across the valley. Tall elms and poplars, rounded hills, green meadows, winding stream—you can imagine the quiet beauty of it all.

A turn in the road brings us in sight of McGillop, walking briskly along under the load of a huge portfolio, sketching-easel, and camp-stool, perspiring as usual, and damp, and eager for information.

'Well, well, what and hev ye been here long?' McGillop has been staying in the neighbourhood, and knows the abbey well. 'Just a bit ruin,' he says; 'ou, ay; ye'll get nothing there. But the church, ay, the church. I've been there all day—just raining, you know; and so, and so—ay, ay, ye know. Detayls, ye know, and dimensions. Ay, yes, it's a bit interesting that,' he says cautiously.

I don't know whether McGillop is an artistic architect or an architectural artist; anyhow he devotes himself to buildings, and his sketches are always faithful and painstaking. He has got a lot of things of this old church of St. Wandrille—mouldings and capitals and soffits, and all the rest.

'Just look here now,' drawing a sketch from his folio. 'There's

a volute—what d'ye ca' that? It's just Ionic, just debauched Classic. There's no Gothic impulse there.'

'Well, that goes to confirm what the guide-books tell us, McGillop; that, according to the Chronicle of Fontanelle, the parish church was built of materials brought from the deserted Roman temples of Juliobona.'

'Hoot awa'!' says McGillop. 'And what should they bring the stones all that way for? And as for that, those sculptures were done *in situ*, you can see by the joints and working of them; and why shouldn't they have a Roman temple at St. Wandrille, just as well as at your Juliobonus?'

It is quite a model little Norman village, this St. Wandrille, with its massive church-tower and pyramidal spire, and the white buildings of the abbey showing beyond. There is a brand-new Italian gateway now to the abbey, and an obtrusive Calvary in the churchyard, and a sepulchre lower down. It is the seat of the Marquis Stackpoole, if you please, chamberlain of the Pope and what not; and he has restored this abbey till you would not know it again. But there is a handsome cloister of the sixteenth century well restored, and a refectory of the same character; and some people may be interested in knowing what the cell of a Benedictine was like a century ago. The church, too, shows the remains of piers and columns. But that had fallen to pieces before the dissolution, and its Gothic tower, which had fallen down, had been replaced by a wooden dome after the Italian taste.

But the parish church is really quaint and interesting; and we are almost inclined to agree with McGillop, and believe that we have here very early Christian work, anterior to the Norman invasion, done under the impulse of Roman influences. There are exhibited here some human relics—thigh-bones, tibia, and so on—in glass cases, neatly bound with white satin ribbon, brought from Rome by the Marquis, which are also curious in their way.

Above the abbey of St. Wandrille, on a wooded height to the north reached by a narrow secluded path, is a small chapel dedicated to St. Saturnin, which bears the aspect of extreme and grotesque antiquity. It is of the earliest Romanesque, with round arches and walls of immense thickness, feebly lighted by deeply splayed windows. Here, tradition says, reposes the body of Harduin, a holy man of the time of Charlemagne, still incorrupt, and entire in frame and vestments. The little chapel is to this day the subject of a pilgrimage; indeed, this valley is especially a sacred one to the Norman peasant, a real *Terra Sancta* thickly strewn with holy places.

Not discouraged by McGillop's contempt for Juliobona, we make a pilgrimage to its modern representation, Lillebonne. The drive is about ten miles over the plateau, and Lillebonne lies in a deep valley opening into the Seine valley. It is an ugly desolate-looking place. The Roman amphitheatre is interesting, but the mediæval castle on the hill is not specially so. While on the subject of feudal castles, let me mention that of Maulevrier, already alluded to. You may remember the enthusiastic carpenter, and the subterranean passage and mysterious door he was so well acquainted with. I renewed my acquaintance with him afterwards, and proposed to make an excursion to the castle, and that he should be the guide to the underground wonders. He consented

with effusion. But on the eve of the expedition he appeared to say that unfortunately the clue to the underground passage was lost. It was not he himself who had ever seen it, but his father, who had now been dead for many years. Had his father lived, nothing would have given him greater pleasure than to conduct monsieur through the subterranean works of the castle, which undoubtedly were '*très, très curieux.*' And thus, unfortunately, owing to the premature decease of the carpenter's father, I lost the chance of writing a chapter on 'underground Normandy.'

L'Envoy.

It is a sad moment when we give up the key of our Norman home and see all our possessions piled upon the *diligence*. The weather sympathises with our feelings, and the clouds weep incessantly. The sloppy deck of the steamer Wolf, lying alongside the quay at Havre, seems quite a haven of refuge. The ladies disappear into the cabin, Achates and myself pace the deck smoking determinedly, hoping to put off the evil hour when we must plunge into the chamber of horrors below. Suddenly we are greeted by a figure wrapped up in a huge rug; a skinny hand is laid upon my arm.

'How do you do, sir? You smoke a pipe, sir; I smoke a pipe with you!'

It is the ancient mariner who has survived the shipwreck, and who, with his family and a great pile of salvage, is going to seek fortune in England.

And now we are afloat. The lights of Havre shine out for a while over the waters; the two bright eyes from Cape la Hève send a broad pencil of light over the waves; and our ship stalks forth towards the gray and gloomy horizon.

Farewell to bright Normandy!

SEPTEMBER'S SOLACE.

My dusky chambers take a hue
As rosy as Aurora's fingers;
The square without presents a view
Whereon my gaze enchanted lingers;
For though, in fact, an arid space,
Where lawyers throng of each degree,
The beauty of a far-off place
My fancy's eye can plainly see.
And as, 'neath spell of nicotine,
Vacation joys I well remember,
Once more has come, as oft has been,
The blessed freedom of September.

Once more I revel in the thought
Of field and wood in autumn glory,
The fair expanse where Fate has wrought
The fabric of my early story;
Once more I breathe the scented air
That sweeps across the common golden
With furze, to me for ever fair,
In that 'tis full of mem'ries olden.
What though the flame has died away,
And lives but in a lonely ember,
The glamour of a bygone day
Still marks the coming of September.

O, welcome to the hour that brings
A respite brief from toil and trouble,
And music glad of whirring wings
That flash and fade across the stubble!
O, welcome to the thousand tints
Of green and gold the wood discloses,
The light that tremulously glints
Upon the lawn amid the roses!
O, welcome idyll of the gun,
Which even in the dull November,
With fogs and work that's never done,
Shall light the vision of September!

W. R.

SOME CURIOUS PERFORMERS.

When last in Yorkshire I for the first time heard related, as an innocent nursery romance, a diabolical story entitled the 'Miraculous Musician.' It seemed to be a purely local legend peculiar to the district in which I made its acquaintance, though how it got there, and, being of such a deliciously horrifying nature, why it has not spread itself abroad, surpass my comprehension.

It is the story of an agricultural labourer of the 'ne'er-do-weel' order, whose father had died, leaving his old wife a few pounds and a little of what Mr. Wemmick calls 'portable property,' included amongst which were half a dozen thin old silver teaspoons. The old lady was extremely fond of her reprobate son—he was her only one—and after the father's death permitted him to waste his time in idleness and dissipation, providing him with the means of doing so out of the scanty patrimony her husband had bequeathed her. At last, all the ready-money in the house being exhausted, the young man, against his old mother's entreaties, took to disposing of the household effects that he might prolong his vicious courses, until everything valuable was disposed of, excepting the six old silver teaspoons before mentioned. The well-worn articles in question were prized more than ordinary spoons are. They had been 'in the family' for a hundred years and more, and though they were never produced except on state occasions, their tips were worn thin and aslant by friction against the bottoms of teacups. The young man, finding that there was nothing else left, cast a hankering eye on the old spoons, and would have walked off with them; but when he went to fetch them from the cupboard where the old woman usually laid them, they had disappeared. He questioned his aged parent on the subject; but though commonly so weakly yielding to his demands, on this occasion she stoutly declined to give him any information, beyond assuring him that they were quite safe. This, however, was not satisfactory to the villain. By dint of close watching and prying through keyholes and crevices of doors, he discovered that the old lady had stitched up the silver spoons beneath the material that covered the 'busk' of the stays she wore. This was enough for her unscrupulous son. He watched his opportunity; and one evening, while the good old soul was stooping over the hearth, preparing her wicked son some supper, and crooning to herself the song, 'Keen blows the wind o'er the snow-covered moor,' the ruffian crept in softly behind her, and struck her down dead with a great stone.

Of course he had to decamp, and having turned the old silver teaspoons into ready-money, to blunt the stings of conscience he drank so heavily that he was thrown into a raging fever, and for many weeks lay at the poorhouse between life and death. At last he got well enough to be discharged, but frightfully weak still, and thin almost as a skeleton. With only a shilling or two, and

quite friendless, his plight was as doleful as it could be. It was in mid-winter when he was discharged from the poor-house, and the wind was blowing bitterly cold, and he took his way over a hill that led to the next town, when all of a sudden he was aware of some one singing. He knew the voice in an instant, and the hair rose on his head; for it was his mother's voice, and the song she was singing was the one she had on her lips when he struck her down. It was 'Keen blows the wind o'er the snow-covered moor.' But no one was in sight; no ghost, or anything or anybody. The guilty young man ran his hardest, but in doing so he had to face the wind; and as he sped along, swinging his arms, the tune grew louder and louder, till at last he was driven by sheer fright to take refuge in a cave in the hill-side. There he made a dreadful discovery. *The music was in him!*—in the arm with which he had done his mother's murder. It was as though the fever that had wasted him had made his right arm-bone hollow, and whenever the wind blew up his sleeve the well-remembered tune was played on it, as though it were a flute.

The young man was in such a terrible state of mind that he at first thought of drowning himself in a pond close by; but he was too much of a coward for that, and made his way to the town, as was his first intent. He still had a shilling or two left from the sale of the old teaspoons, and he went into a public-house to drown his terrors in drink, thinking that no one in that part would know him. But his fears would not let him get drunk. He drank all his money away, and then he went on drinking without paying. Late at night they brought him his bill, and told him he had better pay it and get home. He had succeeded in making himself rather more than half-tipsy by this time, and he was in his most reckless and ruffianly mood.

'I haven't got any money,' said he; 'but I am the cleverest conjuror in the world; and if you will forgive me my bill, and let me have some more liquor and a bed here, I will show you the most wonderful trick you ever heard tell of, let alone ever saw.'

'What is that?' asked the innkeeper and his guests.

'Why,' said the ruffian, 'I will make my right arm sing you a song.'

'Pooh!' said the innkeeper, 'that's nothing new: it's ventriloquism; that's how you do it.'

'Nothing of the kind; it's all fair from the bone,' grinned the awful rascal. 'You may place your ear at my fingers' ends and hear it. Only before I begin I must have the door and window open, so that I may sit between, and in a good draught of wind.' And he did so, laying his cruel arm bare. 'Now, old lady, pipe up,' said he. But instead of piping up there issued from the limb such terrible sounds, such lamentations and cries for mercy in the voice of the murdered woman, that the villain fell down in a fit; and when he recovered he confessed everything, and was hanged and gibbeted.

Should the reader ask, as not unjustifiably he may, what this gruesome tuneful story from Yorkshire has to do with the after-dark wandering minstrels of London streets, I must candidly admit that it has no kind of connection with the latter subject, except to this extent, that hearing under my window, breaking in on ten-o'clock-at-night stillness, the excruciating sounds of music unwarrantably

extorted from an unfortunate flute, I was straightway reminded of the involuntary performance on the wicked young man's hollow arm-bone. Nor would the uncomfortable reminiscence be content to be discharged in any other way but at the pen's point, leaving me free to apply myself to the subject suggested by the execrably bad flute-playing of the man in the street.

A nuisance he is undoubtedly, with his spirit-depressing gasps and wailings; but he is not a common nuisance in his peculiar line. The professional musical nuisance of the streets assumes the form of an impudent vagabond, who will take no denial, but will sedulously ply his instrument of torture, until for our crazed brain's sake he is bribed with a trifle of money to move on. But no such difficulty is ever experienced with the gentlemanly individual who haunts suburban squares and roads at an hour when all other street performers are at home enjoying the fruits of their day's labour. Regard him furtively from behind your window-curtain, and as well as he can be made out in the night's dimness you will find him to be quite a genteel figure, with a black frock-coat buttoned up to his chin, and wearing a black hat. Were you to be so unkind as to shed a light on him, you would discover that the black coat is wofully threadbare and frayed at its edges, and that the tall hat is but a shockingly bad one, and maybe that his well-blacked boots are but ill adapted to keep out mire; but these are his affairs. Poor he may be, but, thank goodness, he is not devoid of self-respect. Were you to raise your window and bid him be off, he would not bully you or put his thumb and fingers to his nose and laugh you to scorn, as many low musical vagabonds have been known to do; probably he would make no verbal response at all, but at once disarm your wrath, and make you feel perhaps the least bit regretful for your hastiness, by politely, though haughtily, raising his hat in acknowledgment of your right to dismiss him, if you feel so disposed, and immediately take his departure. Beware, however, that, your good-nature prevailing, you do not proceed to the other extreme. Instinctively arriving at an inkling of the real state of the case, your generosity may induce you to ask him into the hall, for the purpose of interrogating him as to his means of livelihood. He will show himself by no means gratified by your solicitude. He will probably inform you, in faultless language and with a lofty bearing, that you are mistaken if you suppose that his flute-playing is merely a pretence for soliciting alms, or that he is in the least desirous of exciting your commiseration. If you think his performance is worthy of reward, bestow it; if not, you may decline to do so. There is no obligation on either side. But whatever else you may do or think, pray do not suppose that he is a mendicant.

And the best of the joke—a sorry one for him, poor wretch—is that really and truly he does not so regard himself. With a heart-load of pinching poverty buttoned up under his threadbare black coat, he still clings to gentility, and would sooner starve than strip to his shirt-sleeves and earn a shilling by drawing a truck or digging a garden-bed. Mind you, it is not known even to those who are most intimately acquainted with him (excepting, of course, his unfortunate wife and family, if he chance to be encumbered with those responsibilities, and such is almost invariably the case)

that he is an itinerant musician. To see him leave his home of an evening, with his hat perched carelessly on his head and with one glove swinging negligently in his hand, you would think that he was a person with an hour's leisure at his command, who was about to amuse himself by a saunter through the Park. It is not before he has walked half a dozen miles or so, and is quite sure that he has arrived at a strange neighbourhood, that he ventures to withdraw his flute from its hiding-place beneath his waistcoat, and tune up.

I do not mean to say that the melancholy brotherhood of musical martyrs are confined to amateur flute-players. There are those of the family who are even less sane than the individual just disposed of; romantic persons, who affect the guitar and love-songs, and make of themselves nocturnal nuisances by twanging and twittering after dark at the area-railings, for the edification of lovelorn maids in the kitchen. There is the invariably shabby peripatetic who affects the cornopean, and who is never seen any other than hungry and wretched-looking, except on Derby-day, and perhaps for a day or two afterwards—a season when he can readily obtain a job to enliven a jovial 'van party' going to and returning from the races. Otherwise he is all the year round a dependent on the bounty of publicans, outside whose premises he perpetrates his atrocious performances. Possibly it is mainly due to the fact that the honorarium he receives generally takes a liquid form, that his tunes are nearly all so excessively sentimental, and that his nose is so Bardolph-like, and his boots so shockingly bad, poor fellow. I don't know a more melancholy son of music than he of the cornopean, except it be that eccentric genius who, proudly independent of instrumental aid, employs nothing but the whistle with which Nature has endowed him, producing strange and startling effects in the way of shakes and quavers by tapping on his distended cheeks with his knuckles. If any one ventures to compliment him on his performance, he would cheerfully reply that it *ought* to be good, since day by day, as the doctors informed him, he was blowing his lungs all to bits to produce it. The last time I saw him was in company with an organ-grinder, whistling an accompaniment to the opera tunes; but even at that time, poor fellow, his lantern jaws were bound round with a wisp of dirty flannel, and I have not much doubt that he has blown himself into an untimely grave.

With the exception of a few shockingly vulgar young creatures, who do not object to raise their tuneful voices to the accompaniment of harp and fiddle when the fun of the evening has begun at London public-houses, there are but a small number of the gentler sex who endeavour to obtain a livelihood as musical instrumentalists. Those who come within the category of the class of itinerant musicmongers invariably depend on vocalisation; and of all the tribe, my experience is they are most entitled to pity and relief. Despite all the Charity Organisation may have to say to the contrary, I must insist that there is at least one class of persons—if the forlorn sisterhood is extensive enough to be called a 'class'—who seek to relieve their hard necessities by, in a manner, appealing to the public, and whom it is proper to assist on the spot, and without the formality of inquiring name and address, so that the 'case' may be properly investigated. I allude to women who

are never seen by day, but whose voices are occasionally heard at night in quiet streets and places retired from highway bustle and noise, plaintively singing. I cannot of course pretend to declare that there are no impostors to be found in this same line of business,—artful female 'dodgers,' who can imitate the real thing almost beyond the possibility of detection. I say 'almost,' because they are never so perfect but that a shrewd observer may detect a difference between the genuine and the counterfeit article. The counterfeit is apt to over-do it—to confine her selections of ballads and songs to the mournful and melancholy, with a good wail on the high notes that accords well with the whistling wind on a blusterous night. Then again they fall into the error that, being dressed with consummate skill for the occasion, it is necessary to be seen by those whose tender hearts they desire to move, and so, if possible, contrive to pose themselves where the rays of a street lamp may reveal them with the required ghastly effect. I know of no class of cheats with whom I have less patience than with the last mentioned, for the reason that the ground they poach on is, and should be as long as dire occasion lasts, sacred to genuine poverty of a very peculiar kind.

The next time the good reader, cosily seated by his fireside, is made aware of a woman singing in the dark street, let him, for charity sake, take heed of it. Could the singer be seen—she keeps in the shadow of the houses, and appears only when a door is mercifully opened for her—she would be found to be a very ordinary kind of person—probably a middle-aged woman, not in the least ragged, and quite devoid of those indescribable characteristics which invariably distinguish the old 'professional' *habitué* of the beggars' common lodging-house. A decent woman attired in a tidy gown, and with a motherly kind of bonnet on her head. The kind of song she sings, however, more than anything else, gives her the stamp of truth. There are many modern ditties and sentimental ballads which would better suit her purpose, supposing it to be planned and deliberate, than those she gives utterance to; but she never learned them. The only songs she is acquainted with, poor soul, are those she learned of her mother, or to please her 'young man' when he came to the house courting her, and who is the gray-headed, ill, and hard-up father of many children, her present husband. The only songs she knows are such as are sung in the family circle at Christmas time, and on other rare occasions of domestic jollifications—'Woodland Mary,' 'The Lass of Richmond Hill,' 'William at the Garden-gate,' and that sort of thing. And these quaint, out-of-fashion, homely 'humdrums' are the best she can do to secure your sympathy. Do not deny it her. It is no secret, to those who are skilled in these matters, that this is a means of procuring the price of a loaf for hungry little mouths, occasionally resorted to by poor mothers who are at their wits' end on account of an empty grate and a bare cupboard at home. It is not exactly begging; nobody need know it; not even, if it comes to that, the sick-a-bed husband, whose long illness is the sad cause of all the trouble. She has been often praised for her voice (she forgets how many years ago that was), and if strangers like to give her a trifle for her singing, why, no one will be the wiser, and her children will not go supperless. It is scarcely

a year ago since an exceedingly painful case of the kind in question came under the notice of a gentleman of high standing in the musical world of London. One night, while passing through a square at Kensington, he heard a woman singing in a voice the rich quality of which at once arrested his attention. He listened at a distance, and in a few minutes felt convinced that the singer, whoever she might be, need not resort to the streets to obtain a livelihood. He discovered her to be a young woman of delicate figure, but the moment he addressed her she lowered her black veil so quickly that it was impossible for him to see her face or with any exactitude judge of her age. In his customary kindly manner Mr. —— commenced a few inquiries; but in a half-terrified manner she would tell him nothing beyond that she was in no need of private assistance, nor any desire to make her voice a means of earning money in any other way but that in which she at present exercised it. Finally, rejecting the half-crown Mr. —— would have pressed on her acceptance, she hurried, almost ran, away, and disappeared in the darkness.

Oddly enough, in less than a week afterwards Mr. —— chanced to be at the house of a friend who resides at Peckham, which is many miles distant from Kensington, and there, as they sat about ten o'clock in quiet converse, came the well-remembered voice with startling distinctness in at the open casement. Under the circumstances it was no wonder that the musician listened again and with redoubled interest, and was more than ever convinced that here, if not exactly a Swedish nightingale, was a songster of considerable merit 'wasting her sweetness on the desert air' in a most unnecessary manner, and determined to find out something about her. He arranged with his friend that a trusty old man-servant in the employ of the latter should warily follow her and discover where she resided. There and then the amiable spy set out, and between twelve and one o'clock returned with the intelligence that the young woman, after singing here and there until nearly eleven o'clock, had taken the omnibus at Camberwell-green, and that she finally entered a house in a respectable street at Dalston.

Resolved not to be baffled in his good intention, and thinking nothing else but that the songstress, whoever she might be, had avoided him from sheer delicacy and timidity, Mr. —— made it his business to call at the house at Dalston next evening.

A small servant-maid opened the door, and being of course ignorant of the name even of the individual of whom he was in quest Mr. —— inquired for the 'lady who gave lessons in music.' There was no music-teacher lived there, the girl said. Could he see the lady of the house? No; she was from home. Nobody was at home but her master and the two little children. Could he see her master? No; the small servant thought not. Master was very ill, had been ill for ever so long, and nobody ever came to see him; so by that she, the servant, thought that he did not wish to see any one. 'I think you must have come to the wrong house,' suggested the shrewd little domestic, no doubt drawing evil augury from poor Mr. ——'s embarrassed manner.

'The lady I wish to see is rather tall and of a slim figure. When out dresses in a dark-gray skirt

with a black mantle. She wears violet-coloured gloves and a black veil.'

'That's my missus!' said the girl, opening her eyes wide at the unmistakable description. 'You had better walk in, and let me take up your card to master.'

In a few moments Mr. —— was ushered to the presence of the head of the establishment. The room in which he was, was but poorly furnished, and the invalid —a young man of thirty or thereabout, and evidently a victim to consumption—was seated in an easy-chair.

'From what I can understand from the girl, you wish to see my wife, sir,' said he. 'May I take the liberty of inquiring the nature of your business?'

Now had Mr. —— been no more clever as a musician than as a tactician, he would scarcely have been eligible as a member of a German band.

'Well,' he replied, with good-humoured bluntness, 'there can be no good in beating about the bush. The fact is—'

And, without further ceremony, he shortly put the sick man in possession of all that he knew of the matter in hand—how he had, on the first occasion, been much struck by the tone and quality of the lady's voice; how that she had fairly run away from him when he ventured to put a few questions to her; how that, curiously enough, he was so fortunate as to hear her again while at the house of a friend; and so on, until he was cut short in the midst of his explanation by observing the deadly pallor that had overspread the sick man's face, and the violent trembling that had seized on his limbs.

'My God!' he gasped at last. 'Can it be true? My wife, the mother of my poor little children, in the street—in the open street—singing for pence like a common beggar-woman? And for me—all, all for me!'

And, with a woful cry, he fell forward out of his chair with his face to the floor. The medical man, who was hastily summoned, found that the invalid had ruptured a blood-vessel, and at once pronounced that he had but a little time to live.

The terrible shock had shortened his waning life. As it afterwards transpired, he was in utter ignorance of the desperate means resorted to by his brave wife to earn the wherewithal to purchase household necessaries, together with a little wine and nourishment for her ailing husband. Utterly destitute and friendless (the man had, it seemed, quarrelled with his own, as well as his wife's, relatives), with two little children, and with a husband hopelessly ill, and unable to help in the least towards maintaining the family, there was no alternative between her taking the burden solely on her own shoulders, and breaking up the little home and applying to the parish officers for relief. She had endeavoured to obtain employment as a teacher of singing, but had failed. Then it was that, keeping it a profound secret from every one, she resolved on her daring scheme. It was in the middle of winter, and though that had its drawbacks to a person who had to stand still in the dark and cold, still that was more than compensated for by the early darkness, which enabled her to start from home about six o'clock every evening (her husband thought that she was engaged with private pupils) to pursue her novel avocation. It was her way to go about the business in a methodical manner. She would invest twopence or

threepence in an omnibus-ride at starting, and that would carry her sometimes in one direction, sometimes in another, two or three miles from home, and to parts where she was not likely to be known. Her efforts were not unsuccessful, her average evening earnings being about four-and-sixpence, which, with what she was able to earn at fancy-needlework during the daytime, enabled her to keep the wolf from the door. It was at the sacrifice of her own life, however. By no means of robust health, the chill winds and rains to which she was exposed for hours together, the cold miry roads in which she was wont to stand, speedily made their disastrous effects felt, and a few months after her husband's death she too departed this troublesome life, leaving her two little boys to the kindly care of Mr. ——, who, I think, has never been the same man he was before he was the innocent cause of their father's sudden demise.

REFLECTIONS.

There are sorrowful reflections
And a world of recollections
In your eyes.
There is something more than gladness,
And something less than sadness,
In your sighs.

Is it memory awaking,
Vengeance deep and bitter taking,
As you think?
Is it weeping after laughter,
And regret that follows after,
Link on link?

All beyond you night is sleeping,
And the diamond dews are weeping
Clear and bright;
And the moonlight shafts are glancing,
And the wakeful leaves are dancing
With delight.

But to you with mem'ry keeping
Bitter tryst, where Time is reaping
Fruits of pride,
Night is only daylight ended,
When old pain with new is blended—
Naught beside!

RITA.

[illegible] probably [illegible] she was [illegible] made [illegible]

REFLECTIONS.

◆

[illegible]
And a [illegible]
[illegible] eyes.
[illegible] gladness,
[illegible]
In your [illegible].

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
And [illegible]
[illegible]
With [illegible].

Even with [illegible] keeping
[illegible], where Time is reaping
Fruits of pride,
[illegible]
[illegible] —
Naught beside!

REFLECTIONS.

See the Verses.

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

BRIGHTON AND THE AQUARIUM.

BRIGHTON wakes up into a sudden gaiety in the midst of the dead midsummer season. The 'Queen of Watering-places' has the pleasing privilege of having a season all the year round; but in the dog-days it touches low-water mark. Then the local races, following swiftly upon the Goodwood week, revive those arid social regions, which forthwith smile again. The Aquarium continues a standing source of enjoyment. It never took so much money or had so many visitors as during the recent race-week. It is an institution which is not only local, but metropolitan and national. It is simply the best aquarium in Europe. There is nothing in America that approaches it. The next best thing of the sort is the Crystal Palace Aquarium, which, though small, is conducted on careful systematic principles. But the Brighton Aquarium is really without a rival. Unfortunately there is not such a love of science in England that an aquarium can subsist on its own scientific merits. There is a sociable and fashionable element for which the directors must cater. As the shares are at a premium, it is to be supposed that they do so successfully. There is always a programme of varied entertainments. The new *café* flourishes, although the rink, we are thankful to say, is virtually given up, which surely indicates a decline in rinkualism. Then the *restaurant* department, 'under entirely new management,' is greatly improved. You may now get a club dinner at club prices. There are newspapers and periodicals in plenty, but, to carry out the club idea, we should like to suggest a few books and a writing-table, as at the Westminster Aquarium.

But the proper business of an aquarium is with fishes. It is wonderful how fishes get on without space and without the oceanic ozone, but they do so. Every week there is an official report of the state of the fish, and out of so great a number there are only six or seven deaths. That baby sea-lion was a great windfall, and we are glad that the old sea-lion has considerably abated his roaring. Sea-lions have been reared nowhere else. The experiment at San Francisco failed utterly. This is the first time they have ever been known to breed in tranquillity. Mackerel and herring generally present great difficulty, but here we have large fine shoals; very few are lost. Whitebait are good, and the Aquarium people are satisfied that whitebait are the fry of the herring. The mudfish from Gambia are very noticeable. The immense sturgeon has disappeared within the last twelvemonths; but there are some fine sturgeon coming on, more than a score of them. The sterlet, small, though of full size, are very plentiful. While the ordinary caviare is procured from the row of the sturgeon, the best caviare is procured from the sterlet, and it takes hundreds of fish to set forth a single dish.

There is no large octopus at the present time—the devil fish, as M. Victor Hugo aptly but inaccurately calls him; in fact, making this fish the hero of a romance—but then the octopus is a short-lived brute, not exceeding his eighteen months or two years. The tropical department, though small, is a great success, with the crocodile, alligators, and electric ells. They don't, at Brighton, repeat the mistake that was made at one place, of injecting hot steam in the water, by which some unfortunate electric ells were once boiled alive. The alligators are fed about every Thursday evening on fresh fish, and then go to sleep contentedly till next feeding time.

Brighton just now is remarkable not only for its fishes, but its birds. The Exhibition of Birds in the Dyke-road is unique in its way. They all fell to the gun of the exhibitor, Mr. Booth, who devotes the proceeds to charities. They are very cleverly exhibited in settings which exemplify their *habitat* and surroundings, but no attempt is made to exhibit them in a scientific classification. It appears not unlikely that we may have another institution in the close neighbourhood of the Aquarium. Anything that adds to the general attractions of Brighton will add to the prosperity of each public place, but there will be no possibility of rivalling the Aquarium in its peculiar line. At present a large amount of land is being reclaimed from the sea between the Chain Pier and Kemp Town, a veritable under-cliff, mainly in consequence of the system of groyning. This is only a small amount of reparation due from the sea, as Brighthelmstone or old Brighton now lies beneath the beach. In one great storm no less than one hundred and thirty houses were swept away, and the wretched inhabitants driven forth to seek refuge in the town on the cliff. Much of the soil is now in gradual process of being re-won. Already a good road is made at the base of the cliff; there are some slight enclosures of green foliage, and ivy is being trained against the chalk. It is to be hoped that the authorities, whoever they may be, will utilise the land rescued from the tides. There is the opportunity of great financial savings to the borough, and of great gratification to residents and visitors. Already we hear rumours of a colonnade and sea-baths, of a row of marine villas, of a winter- and summer-garden. The Aquarium is admirably situated in the very centre of Brighton, close to the Pavilion, the historic Steyne, the new parish church, the main converging streets. Any further attractions to the West will add to the superiority of its site; and as Brighton is a place rather of imperial than of local interests, they will, we trust, be multiplied. But the Aquarium will long hold its unique place, and every lover of science and of interesting and elevating amusements will give it his support and best wishes.

NEW BOOKS.

We have a great kindness for Sir John Bowring; his fine presence, his keen intellectual expression, his whole aspect indicative of energy and purpose, seem with us still. There are very few men, who, taken 'all round,' have done and written so much as Sir John. There have been greater writers, although he wrote some forty volumes, and prospered with them all. There have been greater travellers, although it has been given to few men to know both Europe and the remote East so

thoroughly. It was in the remarkable combination as a writer and as a worker that Sir John's almost unique excellence consists. Not much of his work will last, and yet some of it will. His policy in reference to the lorcha Arrow led to a general election and a Chinese war. Sir John, having twice lost a large fortune, had been glad to obtain diplomatic employment in China. Again, he gave England the first and best specimens of Serb poetry—in which he has been followed, though not surpassed, by the present Lord Lytton—that marvellous poetry which is the only Servian literature, and in which are embodied their history, tradition, politics, and aspirations. The books which he has written on the Far East, Siam, Philippines, Java, still compose a valuable literature, destined, however, most probably to be superseded. At the close of his long life, when he had returned to spend his last years as an honoured citizen of Exeter, his native city, he entertained the idea of writing his autobiography. The idea was an excellent one, but it came too late. Old men can hardly revive the freshness of feeling and colouring with which the events of early life should be detailed. Miss Martineau's plan was the best: to write an autobiography, and be content to wait any number of years before the finishing touches of friends should be necessary. All really good autobiographies have been written this way. An old man's final utterances, his *novissima verba*, are generally faint and few. Bowring was not able to produce late what he might have done earlier, a genuine autobiographical work. But he made a very large number of jottings in the direction of such a work; and these possess such interest and variety, that his son has done well in gathering them together in the present volume.* A brief memoir gives the book a necessary unity and cohesion.

He came of humble beginnings, and was brought up at an old-fashioned and ill-conducted school on the borders of the forest of Dartmoor. His highest ambition was to be a Dissenting minister. His first actual step in life was in a merchant's counting-house. But young Bowring had a keen love of Nature, and a fine faculty of observation. He had a marvellous knack for languages, in which he did not very much come behind Mezzofanti himself. He held the modest theory that when once a man understood one or two languages, it was just as easy to understand one or two dozen. He had a genuine taste for literature and political discussion. He was just the man of whom it could be confidently predicted that it would be impossible to retain him within a counting-house. His business first took him abroad, and travel became the main staple of his eventful chequered life, though he came to travel politically, and not commercially. He had great hand in starting the *Westminster Review*, and was, all through life, an assiduous follower of Jeremy Bentham. He intensely enjoyed being a member of the House of Commons, though he had great ill-luck in losing elections, in being unseated, and gaining a dismal experience of bribery and venality. It is remarkable to see how the woollen-trader's son came into a somewhat intimate acquaintance with crowned heads. He was least fortunate in his own country. He particularly wished to have an interview with the Queen, but

* *Autobiographical Recollections of Sir John Bowring.* With a brief Memoir. By Lewin B. Bowring. (H. S. King & Co.)

Lord Palmerston explained to him that his political rank was not sufficiently high, and that the Queen did not like her privacy at Osborne to be disturbed. On the Continent he was much more successful. He was admitted into intimate terms with the family of Louis Philippe at Neuilly, and appears to have cordially disliked the French king. He tells, with great glee, how the king broke down in the armchair, in which he was seated, which he looked upon as an ominous augury for the stability of his dynasty. When he was about to be introduced to the King of Denmark, he was told to take off his spectacles, as the king had a special aversion to spectacles. The consequence was, that near-sighted Bowring stumbled against the very small king and nearly knocked him over. In 1837 he was invited, by the then King of Prussia, to dine at Berlin. He went to the Ambassador to be posted up in his behaviour. Lord William said 'that he saw the king only once a year, and then but for five minutes, while even his ministers rarely got at him. People waited three months for an audience, and the king spent half his time with dancers and ballet-girls. . . . The king's dinner was unlike any I had ever seen. In the centre of the room was a table where the royal family took their seats, while around it were many other tables, arranged as a French restaurant, the most distinguished guests being near enough to hold conversation with the royal family. The waiters were Chinamen wearing their national costume, whom the king told me he had imported to take charge of his gardens, but the project not having succeeded, he had turned them to other account.' Bowring was acquainted with Leopold I., the King of the Belgians for fifty years. The king was very fond of wearing his old clothes till he was absolutely shabby. There never was a sovereign whose influence was happier for his country and for Europe than King Leopold. He clung to Claremont to the last. When he invited Bowring to dinner, he would hold up the gentle bait of having had a basket of fruit from Claremont. The Emperor of Russia (Alexander) sent him a diamond ring in recognition of his translations from the Russian; he did not see him personally; but we have a very pleasing anecdote how he requested Karamsin, the historian, not to spare him in any respect, but to deal with him faithfully. We meet with scattered notes of various great men, and, naturally enough, they say pleasant things of 'the old man eloquent.' Every autobigraphy is inevitably egotistical; but Bowring has veiled this as neatly and gracefully as could be done. He tells us that Talleyrand told him that he was the only man who could make 'an intellectual treaty.' He had the pleasure of hearing Lord Erskine once flash out in his declining years as he did in his very best days: words and tones seemed alike inspired; the subject was that of the Christian evidences. We say frankly that the work might have been better, but it is still very good of its kind. To Bowring's many friends it will be an acceptable *souvenir*, and to the general reader it will prove one of the best biographies of the season.

Messrs. Cassell, Petter, & Galpin have made another addition to their series of Eastern books by an opportune work upon Egypt, written by a very competent authority.* Books on Egypt are

* *Egypt as it is.* By J. C. McCoan. (Cassell, Petter, & Galpin.)

numberless, from Miss Edwards's charming volume, which we reviewed the other day, to that famous old 'second book' of Herodotus, which has been so remarkably confirmed by modern travel. Mr. McCoan terms his estimate 'friendly and hopeful;' we only trust that he is not taking too sanguine a view of the condition and prospects of the country. The Egyptian authorities have evidently placed at his service every possible kind of information, and in return he writes in what may be called a very 'appreciative' spirit. He is an immense admirer of the present Khedive (to use the sovereign title purchased from the Porte in 1866), and thinks that something is to be said in favour of his immense expenditure and overgrown debt. He argues that the debt has practically created a new Egypt; that it is developing the industries and resources of the country, and is creating the means by which all liabilities will be ultimately liquidated. We do not intend to discuss the argument, which will be interesting and pleasing to many of those who have lent the eighty millions to Egypt. Only it is very easy to see that the Khedive has been getting on a great deal too fast. He is trying to deal with Cairo as Baron Hausmann dealt with Paris. *Absit omen.* But he has no moral right to his half-dozen palaces. He has no moral right to annex new countries to his empire up to the Equator, and to hire Englishmen, like Baker and Gordon, to carry invasion and usurpation into the territories of free tribes. Throughout Egypt, agriculture and trade have greatly developed since old Mehemet Ali's time; but the skilled industries, notwithstanding every effort to galvanise them into life, are still stagnant. The wretched fellah, true serf and pariah, earns a sixpence a day; for which he is beaten, overtaxed, and overworked to any extent. Mr. McCoan takes a most favourable view of the good results of our purchase of the shares in the Suez Canal. Financially he reckons the canal a loss to Egypt in the failure of revenue in the old transit duties, but politically he holds it to be a great advantage to her. He speaks of the new towns which the canal has created, and describes the immense works now going on in the harbour of Alexandria. The book lays itself open to the damaging imputation of being a political pamphlet on the Egyptian side of things, but at the same time it gives us valuable information which we should be at loss to find anywhere else.

Mrs. Collins has written a graceful and touching account* of her late gifted husband, whose pen has frequently adorned the pages of our Magazine, together with extracts from his letters and poems, a few of which will take rank with some of the best things that he has done. He was a man of singularly bright intellect and cheerful winning ways. He had a keen faithful love of Nature, and was an exquisite lyric poet, both of them very rare and happy gifts in their way. He sat under his trees in his Berkshire cottage, watching the birds, playing with his dogs, entertaining his guests, and in his secluded retreat exhibited the indomitable energy and perseverance that could have belonged to the busiest man in London. In this gentle pastoral life he wrote some ferocious and sensational novels; and indeed his stories, if we associate the author with his works, in some respects

* *Mortimer Collins: his Letters and Friendships, with some Account of his Life.* Edited by Frances Collins. (Sampson Low & Co.)

place him at a disadvantage. He is full of mannerisms, and shows an absence of judgment, balance, and serious purpose. We are hardly able to credit that he wrote for *Punch* and *Fraser* as a schoolboy; it must rather have been when he was tutor in a school. Neither are we able to see any evidence that he was an exact scholar; and we think Mrs. Collins is wide of the mark when she talks of old Samuel Johnson writing serious articles in 'ball-rooms and the rest.' It is hard to prove a negative; but there is no record of Dr. Johnson having ever gone to a ball. Mr. Collins was a good Churchman. He sensibly says: 'If the Church of England cannot make men temperate, will the Good Templars or the Band of Hope be able to do so?' He held Dissent in great horror, and often expressed a strong feeling against it. He was just a little like Dr. Johnson's friend, who had excellent principles, who did not indeed go to church, but always took off his hat when he passed by one. We find him writing, 'Jolly to read in bed on a dull Sunday morning when our one monotonous bell cacophonously calls us to church.' And he scandalised church-going people as he watched them from his gate passing to and fro.

Mr. Collins did not, unfortunately, get on well with the new vicar who succeeded his old friend in the parish. It seems that he wrote some verses for a village penny-reading, simple and harmless enough, in which he used the words *kisses* and *sweethearts*—words which hurt the moral susceptibilities of the incumbent. Mrs. Collins kindly says that 'no doubt he acted with the best intentions;' but evidently, on the facts stated, the parson was hopelessly in the wrong. It is because people who are so very nice—and very nice people have been defined as those who have nasty ideas—ignore the facts of God's earth, and refuse to understand and sympathise with young people, that 'kisses and sweethearts' lead to mischief. Henceforth there was a good deal of slander and quarrelling in what ought to have been a happy village; and we are afraid that we see indications that the poet's sensitive nature suffered in consequence. It is greatly to be regretted, too, that a man of such genius was not liberated from the thrall of incessant work and impending poverty. True, he might not have done so much work, but he might have given us something better—something that would endure. Many pleasant extracts must be culled from this work. 'Once when walking through Buckinghamshire we met Mr. and Mrs. Disraeli and just such another little dog [as ours] in the Hughenden lane; and although neither he nor I had been introduced, he commenced a conversation at once.' We notice that he makes a clerical error in writing, in a classical adaptation, 'O qui me *distat* in Angliâ.' He means of course *sistat*. We are greatly afraid that, despite his regular hours and his quiet mode of living, his valuable life was shortened by his labours. He wrote a book on the *Secret of Long Life*, but he did not attain that secret for himself. 'We may claim and obtain our century,' he said; but it was all a delusion. He worked too hard. He lived at the rate of forty-eight hours a day. He took too little sleep, and, oddly enough, he did not allow his guests to sleep beyond a certain time. And thus the overtaxed heart gave way. We should have been glad to have learned more of such a life if the materials had been found.

But in reality this work is only a record of the last few years, and more especially of the last few months, of his life. It is most interesting so far as it goes, and no one can read it without having his regard conciliated to a very high degree by this brilliant writer and his excellent wife.

The success of the clever *brochure, A Day of my Life at Eton*, appears to have elicited a similar slight volume by some other Etonians, entitled *Out of School.** It is a collection of fugitive pieces, many of them parodies, in prose and verse. One piece, 'An Eton Lower Boy,' is truly described as another and a shorter version of 'A Day of my Life at Eton.' Remembering something of what we have seen of Eton School compositions in bygone years, we cannot say that we think these pieces quite up to the mark, or that they very successfully vindicate the old Eton claim for literary culture. Some of the poems are decidedly clever, but it would be difficult to say whether it is the cleverishness which goes off, or the promise of something really good. 'A Valentine' strikes us as being the best thing in the book, and 'Eleanore,' probably by the same author, as about the worst. A translation from the Second Olympiad of Pindar is well done, being spirited and poetic. In one respect the book will not disappoint the reader, as it sheds a good deal of light on Eton life and ways. For instance, the chapter 'From Oxford to Eton in Canoes,' and another, 'The Ascent of Scawfell Pike' (with a paragraph nine pages long, which ought to be broken up), show the athletic nature of Etonia's children by land and water. Other pages give a somewhat different version of things; for example, here is a bit of dialogue between A. and B., who, having fought and kicked in the morning, have a feed at a pastry-cook's in reconciliation, A. standing treat: A. 'What will you have?' B. 'Let's see' (Looks at *menu*): 'Welsh rabbit, oysters and chicken and ham-patties, lobster croquets, tarts and cream, ginger and cream, strawberry-cream and lemon-water. May as well *begin at the beginning, and go straight through.*' A. 'All right.' We should say that some of the pieces show a satirical talent; but this sort of talent is hardly desirable for schoolboys.

* *Out of School at Eton.* By some present Etonians. (Sampson Low & Co.)

A NEW CALIFORNIA.

A short time ago the results of an expedition into the land of Midian, on the east side of the Red Sea, under the guidance of Captain Burton, were made public; the object of the inspection being to find out whether the reported mineral wealth of the district has any foundation in fact. The topography of Midian is at present wholly unknown, no modern European traveller having ever set foot therein. According to the observations of the mining engineer accompanying the party (M. George Marie), a very large tract of the country is auriferous; so much so that Captain Burton regards it as an ancient California resuscitated. Gold occurs in the rock, and can be extracted by crushing, whilst the sandy beds of the streams running down valleys or wadys yield the precious metal in considerable quantity by washing. The geological formation of the district is chiefly granite and porphyry, the mountains running nearly parallel with the Red Sea. The former inhabitants seem to have been highly civilised and skilled in metallurgical work; and barren though the ground mostly is, a large population seems

to have existed there formerly. The remains of large towns, built, not of mud, like the ordinary Arab dwellings, but of masonry, like that of the Romans, were found; whilst roads cut out of the solid rock, aqueducts sometimes five miles long, fortresses often of massive character, reservoirs, and similar signs of industry and population were frequently met with. Each town appeared to have been a mining settlement, being provided with furnaces, dams for washing sand, crushed rock, &c., and, lying near, the remains of mining works. Besides gold, silver was discovered in the rock, also antimony and tin; the last is peculiarly noteworthy, as it has generally been supposed that the ancient bronzes and other tin alloys were derived from metal brought either from Cornwall or from the Phœnician settlements in Spain and the islands east of the Persian Gulf. Turquoise mines were also found. According to the correspondent of the *Times*, the Khedive, in whose territories Midian is included, and by whose desire the expedition was arranged, has applied to the Foreign Office for leave for Captain Burton to remain, and aid him in developing the gold-fields, should they prove, on further examination, to be as promising a speculation as they seem.

Midian, however, is not the only country where extensive mining operations were formerly carried on, but where population has dwindled down or ceased altogether, and the whole district relapsed into a state of comparative barbarism. Thus, along the coast of Morocco from Cape July to Mogador, there are large deposits of malachite and other copper ores, and also the 'Iron Mountains,' containing deposits of iron such as are undreamed of in England. Silver and nickel ores also occur largely. From Tangier along the coast to Tetuan, there is good evidence that the country was occupied by highly-civilised races before the advent of the Moors; for the ruins of Phœnician towns are to be found plentifully, whilst vines, apparently once cultivated, now grow wild. At Spartel, for example, is an extraordinary cave, where millstones were cut out of the solid rock twenty feet below the surface of the sea, at a period dating from long before the occupation of the country by the Moors. Some of the copper and iron ores of Morocco are still smelted there, the latter by a rough ancient process known as the 'Catalan forge;' the majority of the mines, however, are not worked at all, and great difficulty is experienced in getting consent to utilise them from the Sultan, whose line of argument on the subject is, that his forefathers never worked the mines, and therefore he will not do so. Some lead ore, however, has been raised and exported; the quality of this was very good, averaging 80 per cent of metal; but it was necessary to call it antimony in order to get leave to export it, as the prejudices of the Moors are very strong on certain points. Thus wheat, like paper, must not be trodden on—the former because it is food *par excellence*, the latter because perchance the name of Allah might be written thereon; the unlucky foreigner who through ignorance should violate their prejudices in either of these respects would stand a very good chance of becoming a sheath for the dagger of one or other of the numerous fanatic bystanders. This infatuation of course entirely prevents the growth of wheat for exportation: to furnish unbelievers with the chief

staff of life would, to a Moor, be yet more dreadful than to trample it under foot. During the last few years, however, permission to ship beans, peas, and maize has been granted; which will, it is hoped, prove the thin end of the wedge in opening out the country; especially if it be found practicable to establish a railway line from Mogador to Morocco, and so break down the universal spirit of hostility to Europeans and obstructiveness to progress. It must be admitted that the samples of so-called Christian believers that most frequently come under the notice of the Moors are hardly calculated to impress them with the inferiority of their own form of religion, imperfect as that may be; for the penal settlements of the Spanish at Ceuta have furnished a considerable proportion of the 'Christians' so much abhorred by them.

QUININE AND FEBRIFUGE CINCHONA PREPARATIONS.

The great value of 'Peruvian bark' as a means of preventing and curing ague, marsh-fevers, and the like complaints appears to have been unknown until the early part of the seventeenth century, when a Jesuit missionary at Loxa in Peru and the Spanish corregidor of that town were cured by its means; shortly afterwards the Countess of Chinchon benefited in a similar way by the powdered bark sent to her by the corregidor. For these reasons the drug has since been known as 'Jesuits' bark,' 'Polvo de la Condessa,' and 'Cortex Peruvianus,' and the name 'Cinchona' (which would be more appropriately spelt 'Chinchona') has been applied to designate the botanical genus of the trees furnishing the bark. The great value of the active subtances contained in the bark as febrifuges has led to the production of a considerable trade with South America in this article; but unfortunately this very circumstance largely contributed to a growing scarcity of the best kinds of cinchona plants, no pains being taken to supply the trees injured or destroyed by the reckless system adopted by bark-collectors, who frequently felled trees in order more readily to strip them of their bark, and rarely, if ever, planted fresh ones or even seeds to supply their places. So greatly has this practice affected the available sources of cinchona bark in South America, that it has been found essential during the last few decades to adopt means for preventing the threatened extinction of the cinchonas by acclimatising the plants in other countries, and growing them under more careful supervision, so as to increase and multiply the plantations thus founded. The chief experiments of this kind have been made in India; but considerable plantations have been commenced in Bourbon, Abandon, St. Helena, Mauritius, &c.; whilst many localities in Central Africa seem to be well adapted for the growth of cinchonas, owing to the peculiar soil, climate, and topological characters. An interesting paper on the results obtained in many of these cases was recently read before the Society of Arts by Dr. Paul. It seems that, on the whole, the Indian experimental plantations have not been attended with all the favourable results that might have been hoped for, owing to a peculiar conjunction of circumstances; but that the difficulties are now in a fair way to be overcome, and that valuable supplies of febrifuge drugs may be readily obtained from the Nilgiri Hills, Darjeeling, and other localities where the climatic conditions

are suitable. One peculiarity is that the species of plant that has formed the staple of the South American trade, Cinchona officinalis, did not thrive well in India, nor did the next important species, Cinchona calisaya, flourish so well as to render its growth a very successful commercial speculation. On the other hand, the species Cinchona succirubra (so-called from the dark-red colour of its bark, the other two kinds furnishing pale and yellow bark respectively) grows well in India; the supplies of this species from South America, however, are comparatively small, and its commercial value is not so great, owing to the circumstance that, weight for weight, this kind of bark yields much less quinine than either of the other two species. It appears, however, that though the quantity of quinine obtainable from C. succirubra bark is but small, yet large quantities of an allied substance, cinchonidine, exist therein. This cinchonidine has not at present a high market value, owing to the circumstance that, the South American barks being rich in quinine, and yielding but little cinchonidine, the former alkaloid has been chiefly extracted and employed as a drug, and consequently the latter has not attained to the same reputation. A large number of comparative experiments have been recently made, however, as to the relative curative values of quinine, cinchonidine, and two other similar constituents of most barks, cinchonine and quinidine, the production of which, like that of cinchonidine, has hitherto met with little commercial success; and the result of these experiments is, that in cases of uncomplicated paroxysmal fever there is little or nothing to choose between quinine, quinidine, and cinchonidine as to efficacy, whilst cinchonine also is a good febrifuge, though not quite so efficacious as the others. Thus, out of a total of 2472 cases treated with one or other of the four alkaloids, 2445 altogether were cured, and 27 were not; and the relative amounts of failures were respectively (reckoned per thousand cases):

Quinine	7·09
Quinidine	6·02
Cinchonidine	9·92
Cinchonine	23·25

From which numbers it is manifest that, whether quinine or cinchonidine predominate in a given bark, it will matter very little so far as the curative value of the alkaloid thence extracted is concerned, and hence that, although the Indian plantations are for the most part failures as a source of quinine, they are nevertheless most valuable sources of other and equally efficacious febrifuge preparations. Indeed, according to Mr. J. E. Howard, there is every reason for believing that the bark which first gained the reputation of the cinchona tribe was the succirubra; so that the cures effected by 'Jesuits' bark' in the early days of its administration were probably almost wholly due to cinchonidine, that being the predominating alkaloid therein.

TEA-MAKING À LA CHINOISE.

According to a recent paper sent to the Society of Arts, the upper classes in China select the choicest tea that can be obtained, usually that prepared from young leaves of old trees. A few of these leaves are placed in a small thin porcelain cup, and water, not quite at the boiling point, poured over them. As soon as the beverage is sufficiently cool (which only requires a few seconds, the cups being very small), the liquid is quaffed. In this way only a small

proportion of the extractive matter from the leaf is dissolved in the infusion, which, however, contains the aroma and agreeable flavour in perfection. By this quick method, the consumer skims, as it were, only the superficial flavour of the leaf; whilst on longer standing a bitter extract is obtained. The used leaves from this process are redried and mixed with tea as exported, and this is indeed the main source of the 'exhausted' or 'spent tea-leaves' so frequently occurring in tea as sold in England. The infusion from choice tea may be compared with those scents which are offensive in a concentrated form; but fragrant and exhilarating when diluted. The English mode of preparing tea, however, brings to bear on the subject every resource of science which will tend to the opposite extreme of that affected by the Chinese connoisseurs, viz. the taking out of the leaf every particle of extractive matter that can be obtained. A delicately flavoured and pleasant beverage is thus virtually withheld from the mass of the British public because they are taught to make tea on a principle which appears to have been brought to the very extreme point of the wrong end of the matter. The following is a kind of synopsis of the principles of what is here called the art of making good tea, *i.e.* a concoction that would be abomination to a Chinaman: A round and smooth teapot is recommended to prevent loss of heat by radiation; water perfectly boiling must be poured over the tea, the pot being previously heated, and the heat kept in by a 'cosy' or by placing the pot on, or near to, the fire, so as to 'draw.' Then a liberal allowance of tea is placed in the pot, so as to get as strong an infusion as possible: this tea being of the strongest kind, that is, old leaves from old trees. Sometimes, to facilitate the infusion, the tea is previously subjected to powerful hydraulic pressure (eighty tons to the inch), which so crushes the fibres and cells of the leaf that water will act on it with extreme readiness. Finally, milk is added to the strong infusion containing much tannin thus prepared: by this means a leather-like precipitate in minute particles is formed in the liquid from the precipitation of the tannin by the albuminous constituents of the milk. After this treatment the tea is supposed to be much more bland, the roughness due to the tannin being largely removed by the precipitation of the latter. Occasionally lemon-juice is added; generally sugar is employed to disguise still further the bitter rough taste of the over-cooked beverage. To a delicate palate, a few leaves of the choicest tea at ten shillings a pound, treated in the Chinese fashion, yield a much more delicious infusion than a much larger quantity of a lower-priced tea used after the English plan, the cost being much about the same in each case. Moreover, the constant use of strong-tea infusions seriously affects the health of many people, frequently rendering the complexion yellowish, and requiring an artistic application of rouge to rectify the unhealthy tinge.

BAMIA COTTON.

A great amount of interest has lately been excited by the importation into England of a supposed new species or variety of cotton shrub from Egypt, the advantages of which, over the ordinary kinds, are said to be that the plant is far more productive, averaging forty-five to sixty pods per tree, whilst the common kinds usually

bear only twenty-five to thirty-five; also the Bamia cotton runs up to ten or twelve feet in height without any branching, which allows a greater number of plants to be raised in a given space of land, inasmuch as they can be planted much more closely together. It seems, however, questionable how far this crowding together will be profitable in the long-run, as light and air must be excluded from the plants to the detriment of the crop; whilst the specimens sent to the Kew Museum hardly bear out the sanguine calculations that have been put forth as to the superiority of the new cotton plant; for in some instances the seeds have died, and consequently the pod and the cotton have become deteriorated, whilst the plants have apparently outgrown their strength, some being ten feet in height, but bearing only small pods, not more than an inch and a quarter long by an inch broad; the cotton, too, is not abundant, and is of short staple. Moreover the plants are said to require more irrigation than ordinary cotton shrubs, and to impoverish the soil more; so that it might be necessary to alternate the cotton crop yearly with grain or vegetables.

LONG TUNNELS.

The St. Gothard tunnel, now in course of construction, will, when finished, be the longest structure of the kind in the world, its total length being upwards of nine miles; next to this comes the Mont Cenis tunnel, of about eight miles in length. In order to supply Baltimore with water a subterranean aqueduct of nearly seven miles in length is being excavated; when finished this will be the longest tunnel in the United States. This conduit is circular in section, twelve feet in diameter; it is bored through rocks, mainly consisting of hard gneiss and granite, lying between Lake Montebello and Gunpowder River, and is intended to convey the water of the latter into Baltimore. The hills through which the tube is pierced are not very high, the depth from the surface varying from 70 to 350 feet; accordingly a large number of shafts can be employed, and the work thus continued from many points simultaneously; some fifteen shafts have already been sunk. Hand-drilling is found to be cheaper than drilling by machinery, the bore of the gallery being comparatively narrow.

LONDON SOCIETY.

OCTOBER 1877.

HOME AGAIN!

'No nation,' said Albert Smith, 'makes such a fuss about its "tea-kettle comforts" as the English. No nation is so notoriously anxious to get away from them.' 'And having accomplished this object,' said somebody else, 'no people is more unfeignedly thankful to return to them.' This is true enough. The pleasure of starting on your autumnal holiday is only exceeded by the joy you experience in getting home again. It will not do to say so; therefore I must whisper in your ear, most long-suffering of readers—be you gentle, be you savage, or be you indifferent—that a holiday is not always the rampant success that it is supposed to be. Often a man endures a month or six weeks' unmitigated wretchedness; and it is only after he has been at home for a considerable period and has leisure to re-study *Murray*, and time to forget all the worry he endured, and the inconveniences he had to submit to, that he begins to talk of the jolly time he had in Switzerland, the glorious days he spent at the Italian lakes, and the delicious hours passed in the Black Forest. I know this to be a fact. I have seen men departing for what they please to term their holiday with the grimmest expression on their countenances, and I have seen them returning to work with the look of boys who were just turned out of school.

If our time was properly regulated and we did not live at this high-pressure speed, we should not want any holiday at all. Each day would have its proper portion set apart for rest and recreation. There are people who say that Bank Holidays confer a deal of misery

and expense upon the public in general, and there are others who aver that the ordinary autumnal jaunt is only the Bank Holiday on a large scale. But I will have nothing to do with such individuals, who trade in cynicism, wholesale, retail, and for exportation. What I desire to show is, that returning after a holiday is by no means the condition of misery that it is usually supposed to be; that we need not pity people because their holiday is over. No. In many cases we may tender our most hearty congratulations.

Home come the tourists from Calais to Dover,
Swiftly and surely borne over the foam;
Home when the holiday season is over,
Worn out with travel, they're glad to come home!
Glad to leave polyglot phrases behind them,
Charmed to revisit their haunts and the Club;
Glad to be going where letters may find them,
Joyed to return to their home and their 'tub'!

There is no doubt whatever about the truth of this. Any day you choose to take your stand upon the Admiralty Pier at Dover, in the autumn season, will convince you of this fact. Dover is well behaved. It does not indulge in the 'seaside manners' of Folkestone. It does not say much, but, like the old gentleman's parrot, it thinks a great deal. As the crowd creep up from the Foam, and tumble into the train, or stroll along the pier, one cannot help thinking how happy every one seems to be. Look at that tall stalwart man in a cheviot suit. If I mistake not, he is the author of that wonderful little book of travel, entitled *All over Europe, with a Flannel-shirt and a Tooth-brush.* He has been knocking about anywhere you please during the last three months. He has only seen a newspaper occasionally; he has never received his letters at the proper time; his flannel-shirt has shrunk, and his boots are played out. Did you see with what eagerness he bought a copy of the *Times*, and any papers he could lay hands on, just now? Cannot you imagine his joy at dining quietly at his club to-night; in finding a dozen white shirts in his bedroom; in perceiving once more his capacious bath and the ample supply of Baden towels? If you are dissatisfied with your lot in London, it is well worth while to go away for a time, in order that you may discover how well off you once were.

Again, those two merry damsels, with their delicately bronzed faces —'so kissed by ardent sunny ray, that bright carnation blushes through the brown'—have had a pretty rough time of it at Chamouni lately. They have been mountaineering; they have been as far as the Grands Mulets; and they have been travelling with less luggage than one would deem possible for girl-kind ever to be satisfied with. Look at their shabby serge dresses, their battered little hats. They have been out on the clamber for the last six weeks; they have worn short petticoats, woollen stockings, hob-nailed boots, and scarlet knickerbockers. They have 'lady's-maided' one another, and have made themselves smart for *table d'hôte* by means of bright ribbons and paper cuffs and collars. Do not you suppose these two damsels will give a little shriek of delight when they enter their own bedroom this evening, and find a blazing fire, and their own maid Hemlett—Hemlett the rosy-cheeked, the ever-thoughtful, the unobtrusive—has placed out an array of clothing that positively astonishes them? Don't you ima-

gine how highly these young ladies appreciate the advantage of being home again? Do they not discover that they have been living in luxury all their lives without knowing anything about it?

Observe also, if you please, that stout Paterfamilias. He is smiling as he has never smiled since he left the shores of England many weeks ago. He yielded to the importunities of his wife and daughters, and he has been dragging out a weary existence in being 'chivied'—as he would term it—from one place to another all about the Continent. He has met few people that he knew, and those few he did not like; he has had his meals at irregular intervals; he has been kept up late, and hurried from his bed at a very early hour to see a sunrise that turned out a decided failure; he has been puzzled by the rate of exchange, and worried by debased coinage of every description; he has made himself ill by drinking curious vintages, and has become weary of pictures, of palaces and antiquities. I own I should like to see this gentleman, when he has been mollified by an excellent dinner, and is sitting with his toes under his own mahogany, this evening, and leisurely sipping a glass of that particular port that he sets such store by. He would tell you most emphatically that you can never enjoy the comforts of home till you have been abroad.

Home come the *baigneuses* divinely capricious,
Husht the light laughter that gladdened the tide;
Silent the *Plage* is at Deauville delicious;
Quiet the shore is at Weymouth and Ryde!
Gone are the girls who once carelessly flirted,
Sirens are scarce upon Scarborough Sands;
Whitby is empty and Filey deserted!
Mute is the Teutonic braying of bands!
Cold blows the blast round the sweet Isle of Thanet,
Ramsgate is chilly and Margate is slow—
The sand's a Sahara—where e'er you may scan it;
The season is over, 'tis better to go!

The break up of the bathing-season is also frequently hailed with joy. English landladies have not, with some very few exceptions, learned the art of making their lodgings so attractive as to cause people to prefer them to their own homes. A few wet days are sufficient to make you quite disgusted with seaside lodgings or seaside hotels. It is astonishing how immediately seaside life is thrown out of gear directly the weather interferes with out-of-door life. Any one who knows anything about large families can testify to the truth of this. The ordinary course of events is for Paterfamilias to devote himself to his newspaper after breakfast. The boys go out swimming or sailing. The girls, Rosie and Milly, after they have disported themselves in the water in coquettish bathing-dresses, dry their back-hair over a novel on the beach. The girlettes, as some one once called young girls, 'seeing every female between fourteen and forty is called a girl nowadays;' some one else called them 'green peaches;' another somebody 'big babies;' it is difficult to know what to call a girl in the days of her short-frockery—well, the girlettes, Dolly and Poppie, betake themselves to their favourite amusement of wading, with reefed petticoats and closely-furled pantalettes, and laving their shapely little pink legs on the seashore. All these amusements go on day after day with praiseworthy regularity, till one day it rains from the first thing in the morning till the last thing at night, and then everybody begins to find out how inferior to

home the whole place is. Mama has discovered what stuffy places seaside lodgings are; Pater does not get his newspaper; the boys are wranglesome; the girls are bored because they have read every novel in the house, and cannot get to the library to get any more; the girlettes, having quarrelled and slapped one another, have been subsequently slapped by mama, and sent to bed. Then, O, then does not the whole family hail with delight the idea of getting home again? A few wet days in October and a few chilly evenings seal the fate of a seaside season, whereas a fine October is the thing that a landlady desires above everything.

Getting back again towards the end of October is really mighty pleasant. In the first place you feel pretty certain that the fine weather is nearly at an end; in the second the evenings are getting short; and in the third most of your friends have returned. You get back then just at the right period. You have passed over that time when twilight is so tiresome—when it is not dark enough to dine by candle-light and too dark to dine by daylight, when you do not know whether the curtains should be drawn or not. *Now* there is no doubt about it; you have everything shut up at six o'clock, the candles lighted and the fire burning. That, by the way, is another great luxury—a good fire in the chilly October evenings. How you would have liked to light a fire at your lodgings at Sniggleby-in-the-Sand! But you feared your landlady, and were doubtful as to the exorbitant price she would charge for coals by the scuttle. There were also a lot of abominable coloured shavings, there were stuffings of paper, there were 'bright bars'—those most abominable and Pecksniffian pretenders of the domestic hearth—and other domestic barriers, which stood in the way of accomplishing your object. *Now* how you enjoy seeing the flames leap up the chimney, and noting the ruddy glow that dances and glitters over every polished surface in the room! How you gaze on the fire; how you interchange silent thought with it! What a world of romance, what companionship, what witchery, is raised by a few pennyworths of coals and a few farthings' worth of wood! You really think to yourself that throughout the whole of your holiday you never, no, never enjoyed anything equal to the fire in your study the evening you came home.

Not the least part of the enjoyment of your return is finding a heap of letters, and discovering how most of them have answered themselves by not having their envelopes opened. I suppose one could scarcely pursue this course in a large house of business, but I am certain that for ordinary correspondence, it would save a vast amount of trouble. Just keep your letters for a month without looking at them, and you would be surprised to find how few of them require replying to. Probably you might get into trouble, and you might be accounted rude by your friends—that is altogether another matter. As a question of saving yourself worry in the matter of epistolary correspondence, my plan would be most undoubtedly successful. You will perchance discover also of what very little value or importance you are in that world in which you possibly considered yourself to be a not inconsiderable luminary. Indeed, I generally find that my world gets on somewhat better in my absence than my presence. If one goes away for a few weeks it is astonishing what a number of important

events venture to come off in one's absence. If you miss reading your *Times* one day, you always find it contains the most important news; so if you go out of town, you generally discover that the most startling events take place in your absence. Your rich uncle dies, Jones gets his divorce, Bullery has been invited by the committee to retire from his club; and you cannot help thinking that if you had waited in town on the expectation of these things occurring, they would never have taken place. Directly your back is turned, it is astonishing the liberty events will take.

Now it is that the club smoking-room begins to regain its wonted population. One by one do the wanderers return, and every evening brings an accession to the ranks of tobacconalians. They come with brown faces, with the brightness and freshness that plenty of exercise and prolonged sojourn in the open air alone can give. You hear tales of travel and anecdotes of adventure and comparisons of hotel-bills on all sides. Just dream in your easy-chair and watch the rings of smoke wreathe up from your cigarette, and you will be perfectly astonished at the patchwork of travel-talk that pervades the room.

'Stopping for a couple of months at Boulogne. One of the prettiest girls that I ever—'

'Killed a five-and-thirty pound salmon just below the Captain's Throw at Ballyshannon—'

'Met him with Pal at the Kaltbad—'

'Very nearly slipped down a *crevasse* at Chamouni—'

'Met Edmund looking "awfully fit" Homburg—'

'Had capital fishing with Nomad in the Wutach—'

'Spent six weeks in a house-boat on the Upper Thames, and had a rare good time of it—'

'Very good bathing we had at the Lide—'

'Johnny and Clem and the whole lot at Scarborough—'

'Nearly poisoned with stinks at Amsterdam—'

'Had rain every day for a fortnight at Coniston—'

'Stopping with Loo at Baveno—'

'Awfully pleasant at Etretat; girls bathing, so like Du Maurier's sketch—'

'A good time at Tunbridge Wells; Penshurst, Pantiles, and all the rest of it. Whom should I meet there but—'

'With the Major at Dover—'

And so the gossip flies about. And so the smoke wreathes up. And so the fire blazes and sparkles. And so London gradually awakens into life; and despite of all the enjoyments of change of air and scene, few people are sorry to be 'Home Again.'

THE TINY TRAVELLER.

JOHN'S WIFE.

By C. M. Hawksford,

Author of 'Who Wins Miss Burton? A Tale of the London Season.'

CHAPTER I.

'Going to be married? Why, John, at your time of life the idea is simply ridiculous.'

I was the speaker—I, who had lived with my brother for the last twenty years, kept his house, provided for all his comforts; I, who had never hitherto doubted but that I should continue to do so as long as I lived.

The startling information that came hesitatingly from his lips on that May evening, as we sat together after our usual six-o'clock dinner, quite took away my breath.

I saw John wince; but I fancied a little straightforward speaking might put the folly out of his head; so I continued,

'I should as soon have thought of marrying myself, John, as believing this of you, if it had not been *you* who had told me; and even now I fancy you must be joking.'

'But a man, Harriette—a man often marries late in life.'

'I am glad you call it *late* in life; but for my part I can't see why, if a man wants to encumber himself with a wife, he does not do so before he is more than half a century old.'

'But I am not more than half a century—'

'Stuff and nonsense!' I replied. 'There is nothing so true as figures except facts, and the *facts* are these;' and I reached down from a bookcase the great family Bible, and turned to the fly-leaf. 'Let me see,' I said, just glancing at John's face, which looked flushed and pained, 'your next birthday makes you fifty-one; for ten and seven are seventeen, and ten are—'

John rose suddenly and went to the window, and I shut up the book and followed him.

It was a lovely evening, and the early spring flowers in the garden sent up a sweet perfume. We were both fond of gardening, and devoted a good deal of time to it. At least, *I* did; for those very flowers reminded me that lately John had not been nearly so much at home as usual, sometimes remaining absent for a day, sometimes two. Where? Yes, that was the question. He had always said it was to visit an old college friend, but my mind now refused to believe anything.

'If this news is really true, John, you will tell me *who it is*.'

'Of course I will; and I know, though you feel severely now, that when you understand that my happiness—'

'Who is she?'

'Marchmont's sister.'

'I did not know he had a sister.'

'She is a step-sister; his father married twice.'

'I hope, John, *her* age at least is suitable.'

The colour mounted perceptibly to his face.

'I will not tell you anything about her; you must see her, and then judge.'

I meant to do so, but I did not say anything more about it then,

for a feeling of bitterness rose in my mind. Had I not loved this one brother all my life, devoted myself to him, putting aside all thoughts of marriage, shunning the opportunities which might have given me a home of my own? And when he had asked me, on my mother's death twenty years ago, to come and keep his house and make it mine, I had never hesitated; and *now*, if he married, it could no longer be my home, as it had been formerly. I was only three years older than John; but I felt as if a great gap divided us, he thinking of reëntering on life, whilst I—

'John,' I said—and my tone was hard, for I feared to give way, and something in my throat seemed to choke me—'*I* have ceased to make you happy. It must be so, since you are seeking out new ties.'

He turned round suddenly and took both my hands in his, and, looking straight into my face with an earnest expression in his deep gray eyes, exclaimed,

'If you could only know, Harriette, what I feel about you—about all your care of me, beginning from the time when I was a mere boy—you would not doubt my love; you would not pain me by saying the things you are saying this evening. My love for you is so great I cannot bear even a cloud—'

I turned away suddenly, and gave a short laugh.

'You are growing sentimental, John, in your old age. Is it the result of your new schooling?'

The flush mounted again to his face; he made no reply, but went out of the room.

I stood as he had left me by the window, for some time trying to grasp the reality of the new idea which had been presented to me, and unconsciously my mind wandered to the bed of mignonette that was beneath. We had planted it together; he had turned back the mould, whilst I scattered the seed; and now it was springing into a mass of delicate leaves and flowers, scenting the whole air, and bringing a crowd of memories with it—memories of old days that would never come back again. John could never be the same to me as he had been. He would have new interests, new ties; he must find all he wanted, all that he could care for, in the woman he made his wife.

His wife! She would rule his house, the house I had so long looked upon as *mine*, and where for the future I should be nothing. It would be her task now to nurse him in sickness, to comfort and advise him. I saw before me quite plainly the position I should soon have to take. If the trial had come earlier I could have borne it better; but as it was, the tears rushed to my eyes, the tears I had been striving to keep back. I loved John so dearly that losing him like this seemed a living death. And after all, who would care for him as I had done? Every action of my life for those last twenty years had sole reference to him and his comfort. 'My brother' had been the words that had fallen most often from my lips. How many nights had I waited up for him and listened for his footstep! and now when he came back it would not be to me—I should not be the one to whom he would confide all the little details of his absence. The first pressure of his hand, the first kiss, would not be mine. Were those my tears really falling? Pshaw, I was getting an old fool myself! So I brushed them away and went upstairs.

No further mention was made

of John's engagement that evening, and we were both rather silent. The evening was indeed nearly gone before we met again, and tea occupied, or appeared to occupy, our attention—mine, at all events, and John took up a book.

It was not till I went to bed that I made a resolve, which I meant to carry out on the following day; and this was, to go by myself and see John's future wife. John would, I knew, be obliged to attend a magistrates' meeting. He had been made a magistrate in consideration of the respect felt for him by all the county, and hitherto it had always been a great source of pride to me, this acknowledgment of his talents, when numbers of others, who held a far higher social position, were overlooked. John certainly was an unoccupied man; he had originally been designed for the Church, and had gone as far as taking holy orders; but ill-health obliged him to give up the idea of active work, so he went abroad instead and travelled, laying up stores of wisdom and experience during the years when I was devoting myself to my parents, who were both more or less invalids.

Ah, well, that was over at last, and John came back and took me home.

'Harriette,' he said, 'I shall never marry.'

I laughed then, for I expected he would; but the blow had fallen after twenty years, after I had given up even the thought of it; and now, as I lay in my bed in the blue room, which room had always been mine since I came to The Cedars, I was thinking almost calmly of going to see John's *wife*.

I had spoken rather bitterly to John about his age; but then, what was *his* getting old to *mine*—mine, too, after all the years I had fancied myself at home? There I was at nearly fifty-five, and no fireside belonged of right to me—at nearly fifty-five, and beginning the world over again; for to stay in John's house after he married I determined nothing should induce me. I had a small income of my own independently of John's, who had, besides what our parents could leave us, been made the heir of a bachelor uncle, who had willed him six hundred a year and the pretty house in which we lived, situated in one of the midland counties, and taking its name of The Cedars in consequence of having some of those lovely wide-spreading trees on the lawn, which, tradition said, had originally been brought over from Mount Lebanon. I should of course have to bring down my ideas; but anything was preferable to the thought of being lorded over by John's wife.

CHAPTER II.

The next morning John went away almost immediately after breakfast, and I commenced preparations for my little visit, putting on a dark-gray silk dress—the one I always wore on state occasions—a handsome black-silk mantle, and a bonnet—well, not too much in the fashion, but, I flattered myself, becoming my years; and taking up a silk umbrella, without which I never went out, in case it should rain, I sallied forth, saying to myself, 'At all events, John's future wife shall see that the family she is about to enter have no need but to look high, standing as they do in the world.'

The village of Kingsnorth, where my brother's house was situated, although three miles from any large town, enjoyed the advantage

of a wayside station, and towards this I bent my steps. The train which passed at eleven would leave me at Ivybridge at about twelve, and from there I intended walking on to Mr. Marchmont's vicarage, for I had often heard John say it was not above half a mile further on, and accessible through some very pretty lanes.

The day was hot, and the carriage seemed covered with dust. I always hated the railway, and on this occasion more so than ever; but, having made up my mind, I determined to make the best of it. When we reached Ivybridge, there appeared to be but few passengers getting out, and no one going my way; so asking the porter to direct me to Mr. Marchmont's vicarage, I started on my way alone. I arrived at last, both ho and tired, and walked slowly up the entrance-drive, which was hemmed in on either side by flowering shrubs and whole masses of geraniums. The vicarage itself was an old-fashioned house, with pointed gables and deep mullioned windows; with westeria and roses climbing all round, so as almost to completely hide the red-brick walls. The garden extended far on either side, whilst a little to the left the Norman tower of a church was seen nestling in among the trees.

So this, I thought, is where John has been weaving his dream, living out his fool's paradise. My ring was quickly answered, and my inquiry as to whether Miss Marchmont was at home answered in the affirmative. The hall struck deliciously cool after my hot walk, and a desire to rest came over me; but I put it aside—I had my work to do. The drawing-room door was opened, and I went in. The darkness of the room at first almost blinded me, coming as I had done out of the noontide glare into the soft shade given by the lace curtains and the closed jalousies; but in a minute or two things grew more distinct, and I perceived that I was not the only occupant.

A girl was sitting on a low seat in one of the recesses of the mullioned windows; her back was towards me, but her face slightly in profile—a pretty little face, with all the soft touches of childhood stamped upon it still. The golden-tinted hair, more in waves than curls, was turned back from her ears, and hung over her shoulders. Her dress was plain white, the collar only being relieved by a simple knot of blue ribbon.

I had refused to give my name, so I remained, standing as I was for a minute, unannounced. Then the shutting of the door startled the girl, who got up suddenly, letting fall, as she did so, the heavy volume which had been lying on her lap, the contents of which she had been reading. I don't know but that I was relieved when I found that I might have a few minutes' respite before I saw Miss Marchmont, so I intimated to the girl not to call any one.

'I have not told you my name,' I said; 'but I fancy every one in this house knows my brother, Mr. Warner?'

She looked at me steadily for a moment, and then came forward and offered her hand.

'My brother and Mr. Marchmont are great and also old friends; but my visit here to-day is to his sister, *Miss Marchmont.*'

'Then you will take off your bonnet and rest?' she said.

I untied the strings and sat down, but the girl remained standing, with a wistful expression in her blue eyes.

'Is Miss Marchmont at home?' I asked.

A soft laugh answered me, and '*I am Miss Marchmont!*' came in childish accents from her lips.

I started up. '*You!* it cannot be—it is not possible. Surely my brother has not been so mad as to ask you to be his *wife?*'

A flush spread over her face, and she drew herself up; but I continued:

'*You*, who are young enough to be his grandchild! How old are you?'

'Seventeen; nearly eighteen.'

And it was said with a touch of womanly dignity, which might have amused me had the circumstances been less real than they unfortunately were.

'Do you know how old my brother is?' I asked; 'because I will tell you. He will be fifty-one his next birthday, whilst you will be only eighteen; eighteen and ten are twenty-eight, and ten are thirty-eight, and ten are forty-eight, and three are fifty-one—*thirty-three* years' difference!'

'It does not matter to me *how* old he is,' she replied, in the same tone she had used before. 'He has chosen me. He thinks me old enough, and—and—he *loves* me—'

But here her voice faltered a little, and her head bent over the hands she was nervously clasping together.

'Stuff and nonsense! He is too old to fall in love, unless perhaps it had been with some one suitable. As for your life, child, it would be made miserable, living always with a man whose tastes and habits are a lifetime in advance of yours.'

'Nothing can alter it now,' she said.

'Your brother—when do you expect him? when will he be at home, for I *must* see him?'

'He won't be back till this evening; perhaps not till to-morrow morning.'

I had made up my mind to wait for him; but as it was, how could I? I sat down and unfastened my cloak, and as I did so a remembrance of the feeling with which I had so carefully put on my best clothes flashed upon me. Could it be *this* child I had meant to impress with the dignity of all things pertaining to John? I fancied then that, had I found John's choice suitable, I had been prepared for being at least reconciled to giving up my rights, and retiring; but to put them into these baby-hands—to leave his fireside, knowing that he had no one capable of managing for him—'O John, that it should have come to this!'

The next train which stopped at Kingsnorth did not leave Ivybridge till three. But I could not stay at the vicarage; I did not want to say anything harsh, and I feared I might if I remained.

'Good-bye, Miss Marchmont,' I said, refastening my cloak and bonnet, and rising as I spoke. 'If I have seemed harsh, remember that, compared to you, I am an old woman, and see more plainly than you do the consequences that follow an ill-assorted marriage.'

She gave me her hand, and I saw the tears rising to her eyes.

'Poor child,' I exclaimed; 'but I do not blame you.'

She took her hand suddenly away, and flinging herself down upon the sofa, sobbed as if her heart would break. I waited a few minutes, watching the soft golden head, on which the sun, which was creeping in through the jalousies, seemed to leave a ray of light; and by one of those curious freaks of memory my thoughts went back, and brought before me a scene that had happened long and long ago. I was a girl once more, and the July sun was shining, and the birds

were singing, whilst the voice I was never more to hear had whispered its last words of parting, and my heart seemed breaking. But time had effaced the childish wound years before; still the remembrance of it softened me at that moment. I went across the room, and took Miss Marchmont's hand in mine as I gently said,

'Good-bye. You must not be vexed with me. I have your *real* welfare at heart; think well over what I have said, and that I have said it as a friend who wishes to point out to you what others may have neglected doing, and what my experience tells me is right.'

Then without another word I left the room, went through the cool flagged hall, and was once more out of doors and on my way back to the station.

When I reached home, my first act was to take off and put away my fine clothes in the drawers, and resume again my every-day costume. After that I sat down and waited for John's return. How long he was in coming! Generally he returned in time for dinner; but the hour passed, and I had to dine alone, and it was not till nearly eleven o'clock that I heard the hall-door open. John looked tired, but he stooped to kiss me, as he always did, saying,

'I was over-persuaded to stay and dine at Sir William Acton's. I hope you did not wait for me, Harriette.'

'I waited; but that did not signify; I have waited before, John.'

He put his hand on mine with a caressing movement, which he sometimes used.

'Have you been dull to-day, Harriette, or have you been out?'

'Yes, John, I have been out—further away from home than I have been for a long while.'

'Where?'

'To Ivybridge.'

He took his hand suddenly from off mine.

'Harriette, why did you not tell me you were going?'

'Perhaps,' I replied, 'it would have been better if I had; I should, at all events, have been spared the painful surprise that waited me. *John, you can't really mean to marry that child!*'

John's face paled, and by the lamplight I was attracted to observe the gray hairs which had begun to mingle with the brown. He looked older to-night, I fancied, than I had ever thought him, and this gave me courage to speak.

'I went to Ivybridge, expecting to find a woman in Miss Marchmont—some one, John, who could have taken up her proper position in the county as your wife, some one who would be a companion to you; as it is—'

'As it is, she is the only woman I have ever cared for since—*you* know, Harriette, since when. I thought I should never care for any one again. I never meant to have loved Dora more than I should have loved any sister of Marchmont's. I was carried on imperceptibly till—till—'

I did not speak, so he continued,

'Till I found out how very dear she had become, and then, before I let her know anything about it, I spoke to Marchmont fully and candidly; and he, far from looking upon it as you do, was perfectly satisfied that if she cared for me, and—'

'No child like that,' I exclaimed hastily, 'could know her own mind. She has never, perhaps, had a lover of any kind, and her vanity is flattered; remember this in years to come, when she will still be a girl and *you*—'

'O Harriette, why torture me with prognostications of the fu-

ture? Whilst I am happy in the present, why not allow me to remain so?'

'Because your foundation is on sand, John. *I* love you also; I have loved you all these years, and I ask you to give it up.'

John took a rapid turn in the room; then standing still before me, he replied,

'If I thought it for *her* happiness I would do so even now, Harriette; but my little Dora—'

I laughed. 'The feelings of seventeen, John, will not be so hopelessly involved. Send her a doll, and see if that might not prove a sufficient consolation.'

Something like anger spread itself over John's face; but it passed away, and he said gently,

'Harriette, you are vexed and you are disappointed in me, so I forgive you; but remember, Harriette, the hard things you are now saying are about my *wife*. I am so far influenced by your opinion that to-morrow I will go to Ivybridge, speak again to Marchmont, telling him your opinion, and offer Dora her release.'

I smiled grimly as I thought how well *she* knew it already; but I said nothing.

'If,' he continued, 'Dora still wishes it, I shall carry out my engagement.'

'John, you are your own master; I have only done and said all this because I thought it my duty, and if the future should turn out as you *don't* now expect, you won't blame me. I feel, John, that I have lost you—that a baby-face has come between us; but I shall go away and—'

'Harriette, you will not leave us; so long as I have a home, my sister must share it. Harriette, you are not *seriously* thinking of leaving?' And John took both my hands, and looked into my face. 'Harriette, I cannot spare you, now that we have been together so many years.'

I had to gulp down something that was like a sob, but I only partly conceded the point.

'John, I am nothing to you now; you will be better alone.' And I took up my candle and rose to go.

He opened the door for me.

'Remember that room will be yours always, Harriette, and I shall always be your brother, and The Cedars your home.'

I did not answer, but went straight up-stairs, feeling already *a guest* in my brother's house.

CHAPTER III.

I FELT perfectly convinced in my own mind of what would be the result of John's visit to Ivybridge. Of course Mr. Marchmont would not wish the engagement given up, when it offered so many advantages to his little sister, who was, I made no doubt, taken by him through kindness; for I now remembered having heard of some stepbrothers, so if he was expected to provide for them also, the marriage of Dora with a man like my brother would be most desirable. I had always hitherto respected Mr. Marchmont, but now I longed to see him and speak my mind. But wishing was no use, and before we met again it was too late.

I saw by John's face, the moment he came in after his visit to Ivybridge, that my worst fears were confirmed. He looked ten years younger, and was brimming over with hilarity like a schoolboy. He kissed me gaily, and said it was 'All right,' and that Marchmont had behaved, as he always did, like an own brother; and, moreover, the wedding was fixed to take place quite quietly,

early the following month, from his house, and that I of course was expected to go.

But of this arrangement I would not hear. After what had passed, I determined to keep out of being present at the ceremony. I would only consent to remain and prepare the house for them, and then, just before their return, go on a visit to an old friend.

To this also John objected, wishing to persuade me to be at home to receive them; but I insisted, and so it was finally settled.

'You know you have your home here,' John said the night he wished me good-bye. 'The blue room will be kept for you exclusively; and, Harriette, you must try and love my little Dora, for we can be so happy all together if you only will.'

I carried out all my plans; I prepared the house, making such little alterations as it now required; and a few days before the bride and bridegroom returned, I packed up my things and went away. The lady with whom I intended to stay had been my school companion and friend years ago, and the friendship had been in some degree kept up. At all events, I had received on several occasions the most pressing invitations to visit her in her north-country home; so that now I felt no scruple in availing myself of the opportunity, and going. She received me most kindly, and we tried to fill in the blank intervals that had elapsed. Her home was pretty, and some of her family, who had grown up and married, were settled in the immediate neighbourhood, so we were not dull. But somehow I could not settle. The thought of John haunted me. I felt so utterly separated from him, more especially as I seldom heard from them. Once or twice since their marriage a letter had come in Dora's childish handwriting, and John's name recurred often, but only in connection with places they had visited or things they had seen. In his own letters he spoke frequently of Dora, but I felt that unless I saw him I should never know if he were really happy or not. My warnings had estranged his confidence, and no little details came to enlighten me.

Mrs. Marriott suggested that, since my old home was in a measure broken up, I should remain with her altogether; and I partly consented, writing first to John and telling him my *possible* intention. John's letter pained me; for although he did not urge my acceptance of the offer, he did not negative it; and I fancied I gathered from what he said a wish, perhaps his, perhaps Dora's, that I should come to the arrangement I had suggested, and *not* return again to them. That determined me. Was I not John's only sister? had I not been everything to him hitherto? was I to drop so entirely into the background, see him only at rare intervals, and have his affections steadily alienated from me by his baby-wife?

No, never! I refused Mrs. Marriott's offer, leaving my brother to suppose I had accepted it, or, at all events, that I was undecided; and one day, quite unexpected by them, I returned to The Cedars. I left my luggage at the little Kingsnorth station, and walked up to the house quite alone. The garden was looking brilliant with summer flowers, and a kind of dreamy beauty was upon everything. I fancied that I had never seen it look so pretty before, but I was afraid to linger. I crept in at the hall-door without meeting any one, and went straight upstairs to my own room.

Everything was as I had left it, only the blinds were down, and the bed unmade. Hearing a footstep outside I peeped cautiously, but found it was only Anne the old servant. She started so on seeing me that I feared she would betray my arrival; so, laying a finger on my lips, I beckoned her into the room, and closed the door.

'Anne,' I said, 'I have come back unexpectedly, wishing it to be a pleasant surprise to your master and mistress. Is your master at home?'

No; the master was out, but the mistress was in the garden. I drew back a portion of the blind and looked out. A slight girlish figure, dressed all in white, with soft golden hair passed behind the ears and falling over the shoulders, was slowly pacing up and down a shady bit of the lawn, just where the cedars spread their dark arms above her, and I recognised Dora. Her head was bent over a book which she held in her hand, but every now and then she would raise it and remain perfectly still in a listening attitude. I dropped the blind, glanced at my watch, and, seeing it was nearly five, knew that she expected my brother. I despatched Anne to get me some hot water, and removing my travelling things, I supplied myself with a dinner-dress from the wardrobe. That done, I returned to my post at the window; but not the same, for there was another which commanded a view of the front entrance.

Presently I heard a whistle, then the sound of quick feet, and Dora was flying down the walk and had passed out of sight.

In another few minutes she appeared again, but not alone, for she was leaning on my brother's arm and smiling up into his face. For a moment they paused, and then she dropped his arm, and clasping both her hands behind her, danced backwards before him all the way up the walk. It was a child's act, expressive of a child's joy; and the little blue-kid slippers which she wore on her feet made her seem like a fairy-dancer, as they lightly touched and retouched the ground. But again on reaching the door she paused, and going back to my brother, put her arm once more caressingly through his, and so clinging to him they passed into the house and out of sight.

I dropped the blind and sat down. I did not know if anything had happened more than I expected, but I felt angry. What a contrast to the return home to which John had been used! I had never failed to greet him; but as a woman greets a man, and that too a man who had outlived his youth and left it far behind, even in feeling. *Could* Dora's conduct be acceptable to my staid brother John? My thoughts were interrupted by Anne.

'The master is home,' she said, 'and dinner is going in, so will you please to come down?'

'And they don't guess I am here?'

'O dear, no!'

'It will be a pleasant surprise,' I said. But I hardly know if I believed it, for I paused at the drawing-room door, reluctant to enter; then I turned the handle softly, and—

I scarcely know what I felt; but I did not advance a step, and I was unnoticed. I had already wondered how my brother, grave student as he was, could bear the constant fluttering round him of a child-wife; but I had not suspected that he himself could so far forget his dignity and his years as to be where I found him that day.

Dora was half sitting, half lying in a large armchair, whilst my brother was kneeling before her, in the very act of kissing the little blue-slippered feet.

Some involuntary movement of mine must have attracted them; for the next moment they were aware of my presence, and John had started up, exclaiming,

'Harriette, is it—can it—be you?'

'You took me for a ghost,' I said, as I advanced into the room.

'I cannot *even now* realise that it is your bodily presence.'

'I excuse you, and can believe in your being somewhat visionary, but you need not let it carry you so far.'

In the next instant his arm was round me, and both he and Dora were giving me a welcome.

'I have come as I have, thinking that when you both urged me to look upon The Cedars as my home, you meant it, and that is why I have refused all other invitations, and am here to-day.'

It may have been fancy, but at all events I thought I saw a glance exchanged between my brother and his wife. The dinner, however, being announced, John gave me his arm and tried to assume a gaiety I knew he was not feeling; for we were all, more or less, embarrassed.

In the dining-room Dora hesitated as to what seat she should take, when my brother, putting his hand on her shoulder, motioned her to the chair opposite his own, saying as he did so,

'Harriette will understand it, Dora.'

Of course I never meant again to take the place of honour in my brother's house; but it was very disagreeable having it pointed out to me the first day of my arrival, and it made me feel a visitor.

The conversation during dinner was constrained, and Dora did her duties as hostess with a shy anxiety for my comfort which was hardly necessary in a house which I had ruled so many years. Anne was the only person who appeared thoroughly at her ease; and she informed me that my luggage had arrived and been taken up-stairs, with a cheerful respect that did more to reconcile me to the step I had taken than my brother's reiterated assurances that he was 'so glad to see me.'

The evening passed off somewhat heavily. First of all, John came, and sitting down by me tried to appear interested in the details of my visit to the north; but I saw his eyes wandering unconsciously to where Dora was standing, and presently he joined her, and she went to the piano and sang. After that they went into the garden, and remained so long, that I followed to remind them that the evening was too chilly to run such risks; but Dora only laughed.

'Remember, John,' I said, 'you are not so young as you were, and as people get on in years they must be careful.'

He flushed at the remark, and I guessed by it that his age was a sore subject. Surely this was only the first-fruit of the mistake he had made; and would not others come? Dora was merely a child, and perhaps happy now—happy at her importance and the new dignity of her position; but in the future how would it be?

Long after I went up to my room I heard John's step on the stair. He was whistling the air of a Spanish march, which I had not heard for years, since, indeed, he was a boy—well, a boy compared to what he was now. Then came soft whisperings; then a door shut, and all was still.

This was my coming home!

They had tried to make me welcome, but I felt somehow I was *not wanted*, and this, I said, after having sacrificed so much to John all my life; but I will not grudge the remainder of it, and the day may yet be when he will come back to me.

CHAPTER IV.

I soon became settled as before at The Cedars, with *one* exception. I saw less of John. He spent more time at home, but it was with Dora. He would follow her about the garden, helping her to take cuttings of geraniums, plant or water, and do a thousand things he had never used to care about; and if he went out, and Dora did not accompany him, she would be waiting, as I found her doing the first day I arrived, no matter even if it rained, for then she would wrap herself in a big cloak and let the rain-drops patter on her head, an infatuation I vainly urged her to give up; but she would only smile a wistful pleading smile, and assuring me it did her no harm, as she had been used to it all her life, go out the very next time the opportunity occurred.

I sat more in my own room than I had used to do, seeing my presence was no longer required, and neither my brother nor my brother's wife made any objection. I interfered in the house as little as possible, except when I felt my brother's interests were being sacrificed to Dora's inexperience, and then I spoke; but John never seemed quite pleased, whilst Dora was so childishly sensitive, that my duty was all the more disagreeable. Still I *did it*.

And so the autumn crept upon us, and gave way in turn to winter, and the winter set in with a will, promising to be more severe than it had been known in our part of the country for years. It was at this time that an invitation came for John and his wife to a large ball given by one of the county families. The idea of their going never struck me, and I was more than astonished when I heard Dora say she had written the acceptance, which she did, as she handed a note to my brother to read. He glanced at me as he took it, but I did not speak till Dora had gone out of the room; then I said,

'Surely, John, you are not thinking of driving ten miles to a ball, and in weather like this?'

'I don't think I have any right to deny Dora all amusement, and—'

'And so you are going into *dancing* society at your time of life! In my day a woman was expected to accommodate her tastes to her husband's.'

'And so she does; it was my own wish she should go.'

'O, that alters the case; but I think you are hardly wise in giving her a taste for amusements which you can't enjoy yourself.'

A cloud came across his face; and I added,

'Putting her in the way of temptation.'

'What do you mean, Harriette? explain yourself.'

'Dora is still a mere child, and hardly knows how much she would appreciate companions of her own age. At home she can make no comparisons, and at her brother's she was equally fortunate; but in society, at balls, the case will be different.'

He was about to answer when Dora came back. She was cold with standing at the open door, and she put both her hands in her husband's as she sat down on a low stool at his feet. The cloud that had risen died out, as he stooped down to kiss the upturned face.

We shall see, I thought as I left the room, how all *this* will end.

By a curious coincidence, a week after the invitation to the ball had been received I met, whilst paying a visit in Kingsnorth, one of the daughters of the house. She expressed their ignorance of my return, and begged I would take a verbal invitation, and be present with my brother and his wife. The idea of accepting at first never entered my head; but I suddenly formed a resolution and determined to go. I did not mention anything about it to John or Dora, but I got out my long-hoarded purple-velvet dress, and arranged a cap of old point which had belonged to my grandmother, and this, together with buying a pair of gloves, completed my preparations, and on the eventful night, when I put them on, their effect gave me perfect satisfaction.

We had dined rather earlier than usual, as the carriage was to come for us a little before nine. Unfortunately it was snowing quite fast, and bitterly cold. When I had completed my dressing, which did not take long, I went down quietly and sat over the fire in a little study—John's especial sanctum—which was beyond, but which led out of the drawing-rooms. John had come down also, and was walking to and fro in the farther drawing-room in the restless way men have when put out of their usual habits, glancing now at the clock, now at the door. Then the carriage drove up and the bell rang, and at last there came a sound of rustling on the stairs, and Dora entered.

I had always been obliged to consider Dora pretty with the prettiness of youth; but her beauty had assumed quite a new character. Her dress was the same she had worn as a bride, white satin, with a cloud of white lace over it, and a wreath of water-lilies in her hair. As she came in she gathered round her her trailing skirt and swept her husband a curtsy, opening her fan, holding it up to her face and glancing over it at him as she did so. It was the perfection of coquetry—*innate coquetry.* When she rose again my brother was still standing wrapt in admiration.

'Little Dora,' he said, 'I do not know you; what wave of the enchanter's wand has done it?'

'Am I always to be Cinderella—never to have a fairy godmother?'

John smiled.

'I am very proud of you, Dora; but see, here is your bouquet.'

And as he spoke he handed her a lovely bouquet, composed entirely of white and rare exotics, which at that time of year must have cost a little fortune, for we had nothing like them at The Cedars. She swept another curtsy; then putting down her fan and bouquet, raised both her arms, and rested her head on my brother's shoulder. He kissed her; then holding her from him exclaimed,

'Where is Harriette? Harriette must see you.'

'I am here,' I said, coming forward.

'Harriette, you dressed! Is it possible you are—'

'Yes, I am going to the ball.'

John and his wife both looked quite frightened.

'Is it anything so very wonderful,' I said, 'that I should go out, when you do it, John? And you need not be afraid, for I *have* been invited.'

'I am so glad,' exclaimed Dora; 'but why did you not tell us? And how well she looks, does she not?' and she laid her hand on my brother's arm.

'I am too old for flattery,' I said, 'and young enough to be impatient to be off; besides, it is hardly fair to keep the carriage waiting on such a night as this.'

John offered me his arm, but I refused, and resolutely insisted on having my back to the horses. The drive was by no means pleasant, being bitterly cold, in spite of feet-warmers and wraps; and it took us an hour and a half, so that it was half-past ten before we arrived, which was considered late for that part of the country. The house was brilliant with lights, and the sound of music began almost as soon as we entered the avenue. The host and hostess received us most graciously, whilst Dora evidently excited the greatest admiration. Even in the ball, where most of the county belles were assembled, she lost none of her attractions—she looked so young and fresh, a delicate flush lighting up her face, and her eyes sparkling with expectant enjoyment. John had not been to a party of this description for so many years, that as one by one the men he knew passed him they each exclaimed in surprise,

'You here, Warner! what *will* happen next?' and a number of other remarks of the same kind.

Dora was, of course, asked to dance. I thought my brother foolish *in allowing* it, and he might have prevented it, seeing that she told him she was quite amused remaining with him; but he insisted, and she went off with one of the sons of the house. John turned to me and offered his arm, and just as he did so a gentleman—some stranger who was standing close by—asked,

'Who is that lovely girl?'

The answer must have told, for a surprised exclamation followed.

'He! you don't say so! Why, he is old enough to be her grandfather!'

I glanced at John to see if he had heard it; but he made no sign except by taking his breath rather shorter, and biting his under lip.

'Are you going to play cards, John?'

'No, I shall remain here; and you?'

'I shall do the same.'

So we both found chairs and sat down; mutual friends came up, and we were soon in the midst of the whirl of what is called society. After every dance Dora came back to John, and as the evening advanced she seemed, instead of getting tired, to grow brighter and brighter. Surely John's experiment was a dangerous one, but I did not realise how dangerous till a little later. Dora was to dance a quadrille with a friend of my brother's, a man who had asked her out of compliment to him, and they were standing a little way off, waiting for the set to form, when a young man pushed to the front, and exclaimed as he seized her hand,

'I cannot be mistaken; you are Miss Marchmont?'

A crimson flush mounted to Dora's face, and she was about to speak when her partner interrupted her, saying,

'I see I shall have to reintroduce you in your new character. This lady is now Mrs. Warner.'

The young man dropped her hand with a gesture of surprise, turning so pale that I thought he would have fallen, when by a violent effort he so far recovered himself as to bend forward and say something in a low tone. Dora apparently acquiesced, and then joined the already waiting quadrille.

I saw that John had turned white even to the lips. He re-

cognised, as I did, the full significance of the situation; but I was sure he would ask for an explanation as soon as the dance was over. Just as the last figure was ending, the lady of the house glided up, and begged my brother would allow her to introduce a Mrs. Wilberforce, whom she was desirous of his taking up to supper. I saw a refusal on John's face; but he had no time—the lady was standing by, introduced, and his arm offered and accepted. John turned a wistful look as he left the room. The quadrille was over, and the young man was claiming Dora's hand.

When John returned, a waltz had begun, but Dora was not among the dancers. John did not offer to go and look for her, although I am sure he longed to do so.

'Have you had supper?' I said.

'No,' he replied abstractedly.

'Suppose, then, that we two old people go up together?'

'Presently, Harriette, presently.'

'You are so vigilant a chaperon you forget yourself, and I am hungry.'

'I am not vigilant, but I—I like to watch my little Dora enjoying herself.'

'Which she is now doing so thoroughly that you may be content to leave her for a little;' and I got up as I said it.

John looked for a moment almost angry; then he smiled rather a sad smile and took me in to supper.

We did not remain long after that; my brother seemed anxious to be off, and Dora did not ask to stay, although her dancing-card was full. The young man we did not see again till just as we got into the carriage; then some one's hand came in at the window, and a voice wished Dora good-night.

We were very silent all the way home. Dora lay with her head resting on my brother's arm, and spoke to him occasionally, but in whispers, so that I could not hear by reason of the noise of the wheels. The snow had ceased, and a hard frost set in, and although the moon and stars were shining we were obliged to go very slowly to prevent the horse from falling, so that it took two hours to get back. We separated almost immediately on our arrival, but I saw, when in the full light, that John looked worn and harassed, whilst Dora was still bright.

'I am only a *little* tired,' she said, 'and I have enjoyed myself so much—so very much.'

'You seemed to have met an old friend.'

'Yes, was it not strange? I have known him since we were children, when he used to call me his little wife. He has been abroad for two years, and did not know I was married. I hardly recognised my old name of Dora Marchmont, and he could not understand my other.' She laughed as she said it, and putting her arm through my brother's, they went up-stairs.

Poor John!

CHAPTER V.

The next day we were all more or less tired, and the ball was hardly mentioned. John devoted himself as usual to Dora, making her lie on the sofa, and reading to her, or making her comfortable, in fact doing every little thing he fancied might please or amuse her. There was a hard frost outside, which I knew John particularly enjoyed; but, contrary to his general custom, he refused to leave the house. Did he fear that the companion of Dora's childhood would come and continue his friendship, filling in the gaps

made by absence? However, the day waned, and he did not appear. The following morning, when I was sitting after breakfast in the drawing-room, and Dora engaged in superintending her household arrangements, John came in and sat down in a chair opposite to mine, holding his hands out to warm them by the fire.

'You should take exercise, John,' I said.

'I am going out presently, Harriette, and shall probably be absent all day. I am very provoked that it is so, but at this meeting of the magistrates my presence is considered absolutely necessary.'

'You have nothing that *I* can see to keep you at home—unless you are expecting any one?'

'No; I am expecting no one.'

'Dora's friend may call, for she tells me that he said something about doing so.'

'But as you are at home, Harriette—'

He was balancing the poker in a would-be careless way as he asked the question.

'Well?'

'There can be no harm in her receiving him.'

'I should hardly, John, think it wise of you to encourage the visits of a young man who has evidently been on the terms *that* young man has been with Dora.'

'What do you mean? What terms, Harriette?'

'You have eyes, John; you saw the meeting as well as I.'

'Harriette,' he exclaimed, getting up, 'if you think I have not the most complete confidence in Dora, you are mistaken.'

'You need not get angry, John, for it was you who suggested I should be at home.'

For a moment John's eyes blazed.

'Dora needs no espionage. Dora I trust as completely in my absence as in my presence.'

'Dora will suffer from no espionage on *my* part,' I replied, with dignity; 'for, like you, I shall be absent from home nearly all day.' And, as I said this, I rose and left the room, not wishing that my brother and I should say hard things after so many years of love and confidence. But disguise it as he would, I knew him well enough to see that he was troubled.

I left the house after John did, but I was home before him, and the first thing I saw upon the hall table was a card with 'Mr. Childers' engraved upon it. I wondered if he had been admitted, if Dora had seen him, and how long he had remained; and I determined to ask. No false pride should keep me from doing my duty.

'So you have had a visitor, Dora?'

'Yes, Mr. Childers has called.'

'An old love?'

Dora crimsoned.

'Hardly that, for we were almost children when we met last; but very intimate, considering we played together every day, and that they lived close by us in the same village. Ah, how well I remember again so many little things which I had forgotten till he reminded me!'

'Pleasant memories?'

'O, yes; of such *happy* days; and yet now they seem so long ago.'

John had come in unobserved, and he remained quite silent in the shade.

'Is Mr. Childers making a long stay in the neighbourhood?'

'I hardly know yet. He is staying at Woodsleigh; but he has promised to call again.'

'Who?' John asked, coming forward.

'You here!' Dora exclaimed,

starting up, and making room for him, as she spoke, by the fire. 'I did not even hear you come in.'

'Yes, I am back again, after a rather long day's work. And what has my little Dora been doing?'

'She has had a visitor,' I said.

'Who was it, Dora?'

'Mr. Childers.'

My eye involuntarily caught John's.

'I have been out, as you know, and Mr. Childers' visit was well-timed, since Dora might have been dull. Did he stay long with you, Dora?' I said.

'Some time; I don't know how long.'

'When we are amused the time passes quickly; besides, you had old days to talk over, and love's young dream.'

Dora blushed again a deep red, and I saw that John noticed it, notwithstanding that he laughed it off, and chatted about Mr. Childers as if he were his friend, instead of Dora's; and then the bell rang for dinner, and the subject was mentioned no more—at least before *me*.

The next day being fine, and John at home, we went out for a walk. Dora had recovered from the effects of her fatigue, or rather John considered she had done so, for he watched her every change of expression, and often, I thought, fancied her ill when she was not so.

'I am much stronger than you think,' Dora said, laughing as she danced before us on the hard crystallised snow, her winter dress tucked up over a quilted blue petticoat, her hands snugly concealed in a tiny sable muff, which material also trimmed her black-velvet coat and hat; 'much stronger—am I not, Harriette?'

'I think,' I replied, 'that young people can generally bear a great deal of fatigue in the pursuit of their own amusements.'

Dora laughed—she was like a child in moments of excitement—and she ran back to John, exclaiming,

'I can bear any fatigue to-day, for, as Harriette says, I want to be amused. Where shall we go?'

Several different walks were proposed, till at last one was decided upon by Dora herself, and we turned in the direction she wished. We had hardly walked a mile when in a bend of the road we came suddenly upon a horseman, and recognised in him the stranger we had met at the ball. I glanced sharply at Dora. Was this premeditated, and done in the careless way it had been to drown suspicion? But her face afforded no clue. In a few moments Mr. Childers had dismounted, was formally introduced by Dora, which he had not been before, and, leading his horse, joined our party. I say *our* party; but we were soon divided, Dora and Mr. Childers walking some way ahead, John and I bringing up the rear. John's face was no longer so bright as when we started, and he seemed disinclined to talk; so we both lapsed into comparative silence — a silence which was broken by the gay young voices in front, and the tread of the horse's feet on the hard ground. Mr. Childers had the reins thrown over his arm, but Dora seemed to occupy his entire attention. Presently the road, which had hitherto been almost level, suddenly rose, and we were climbing a hill.

'I am not so young as I was, John; may I have an arm?'

He smiled as he gave it, and we were soon at the top of the hill. Dora and her companion had paused, and were waiting for us, Dora looking exceedingly

pretty, as her face, flushed with the exercise, had an unusually bright colour. Mr. Childers' arm was now resting on his horse's neck, and standing as they did side by side they formed a pretty group. Certainly Mr. Childers was good looking, dangerously so, I thought, with his bright handsome face and curling brown hair, that contrasted so strongly with John's; and despite his youthfulness—for he did not look more than twenty—he had a certain air of well-bred ease that marked him as a young man who had seen something of the world.

'You are tired, Dora,' my brother said.

'Indeed, I am not.'

'But remember we have yet to return home, and it is over two miles.'

She smiled up at him, but offered no resistance to his wishes, and we all turned homewards. I say all; for Mr. Childers, without any word upon the subject, turned also, and leading his horse kept his place at Dora's side. When we reached the garden-gates he paused, and taking out his watch prepared to say good-bye.

'Won't you come in?' John asked.

'Well, I think not now, for I have a ten miles' ride before dinner. I was on my way to call when I so fortunately met you.'

I just glanced at John. This meeting, then, *was* premeditated, else why had Dora selected that particular road—a road she knew he must come on his way from Woodsleigh, a place which belonged to Lord Somerville? John's eye met mine, and for a moment he hesitated; but the next, after looking me full in the face as if in defiance of the implied suggestion, he begged Mr. Childers to waive ceremony, remain to dinner, and ride home in the evening after the moon had risen.

Was John infatuated? I believed so from my heart. I only waited to hear the young man's ready acceptance, see Dora's look of pleasure, and then I went upstairs. John had done this to show me his *trust*, I supposed. My poor deluded brother!

The dinner passed off cheerfully enough. Mr. Childers had a fund of small talk at his command, knew a good many people in the county, and seemed most anxious to make himself agreeable. After dinner the gentlemen did not remain long in the dining-room, and on joining us John asked Dora to sing, a thing he was accustomed to do every evening, and Dora at once complied. She had a pretty voice, neither of much power nor compass, but very sweet, and it was my brother's delight to sit and listen to her in the half-light before the lamps came in, which they always did with the tea a little later. On this evening she turned at once to Mr. Childers.

'Can we not recollect any of our old songs?' she said.

'I hardly know,' he replied; 'perhaps if you played them I might.'

Then her hands rambled over the piano, and presently the two voices came blended together. John and I sat and listened, as song succeeded song, and though I could not see his face I felt as if I could. When the lights and tea appeared Dora left the piano, and took her usual place at my brother's side. Mr. Childers stood in front of the fire, and I resumed my work in silence; indeed, as soon as tea was over I went to bed, or at least to my own room; but it was not till a late hour that I heard the sound of Mr. Childers' horse's feet echo as they

passed my window on his homeward ride.

The weather continued cold and bright, and Christmas came creeping on. We were all three invited to spend that festive season with Mr. Marchmont at Ivybridge, to meet what was *now* considered a family party, which was to include several of Dora's young brothers, who were coming up from the West of England for that purpose. My brother had since his marriage, I knew, been interesting himself to get an appointment for the eldest of them, and had more or less succeeded, so that Dora was in high spirits at the idea of meeting them again and telling the news. *I* had no intention of accepting the invitation, and my brother urging me to do it did not alter my determination. What would all those strange faces be to me? I had far rather be at John's empty hearth, nursing memories of the past years which he and I had spent together, than among those who seemed to have robbed me of all I had lost. Dora was very urgent I should go, and Mr. Marchmont even wrote several times; but a point I had not conceded to my brother it was not likely I should to them. Then they offered to remain at home themselves; but of this I would not hear; and so it happened that on Christmas-eve I was once again a solitary woman, such as I had never expected to be in John's lifetime.

The days passed quietly away, unbroken, indeed, except by a letter now and then either from Dora or John, and some unexpected visitors who called the afternoon before their return. I was standing at my bedroom window, when an open barouche was driven rapidly to the door. Two ladies whom I did not know were lying back under the head, well wrapped in warm furs, and the front seat was occupied by a young man whom I instantly recognised as Mr. Childers. Some inquiries were made by the servants, cards and a note handed in; the footmen resumed their places, the horses plunged forward, and in another minute they had swept out of sight.

I went down-stairs and took the cards and note in my hand. The note was directed to Dora; the cards were those of Lord and Lady Somerville and Mr. Childers. This was Lady Somerville's first visit at my brother's house, although we had lived in the same neighbourhood for so many years, a circumstance I had hitherto believed to be in consequence of the ten miles which lay between us; and the present honour was no doubt a concession to Mr. Childers, so that the motive at least was far from flattering.

The next day, just before dinner, John and Dora returned. Both were in the highest spirits, full of the late family meeting, and regrets that I had not gone. When we returned to the drawing-room I gave Dora the cards and note. The first she just glanced at, and threw away. But not so the second; for hurriedly breaking the seal, an expression of childlike pleasure came from her lips, and turning to my brother, who was just then coming in, she exclaimed,

'O, is not this charming? We are asked to stay at Woodsleigh for those private theatricals and the ball Mr. Childers was telling us about!'

John looked surprised, and took the note from her hand. He smiled when he had finished reading it, and said, with much gravity,

'Dora, you surely would not

have me so dissipated as to accept *this?* Think of my gray hairs!'

Dora shook her own long fair curls back at him, as she laughed a little mocking laugh. My brother put his arm round her and drew her to his side, where she remained for one moment, and then starting back exclaimed,

'I shall accept, now, at once;' and she went into the back drawing-room, where the writing materials were kept.

'John,' I said, 'surely you are not going?'

'Why not?'

'I think you are too old for the frivolities of a country house such as Woodsleigh, and Dora—'

'Well, and Dora?'

'Is too young.'

'What do you mean? Surely if she can ever enjoy life it is now; it *ought* to be now.'

'That depends on what the enjoyment is. Some things are better resisted.'

'What do you mean, Harriette?'

'I mean that at Woodsleigh Dora will be laid open to things hitherto undreamt of—admiration, flattery, *attentions.*'

'And if she is?'

I laughed. My poor infatuated brother!

'John, you are your own master; but remember, should you be disappointed in the *result* of this visit, I warned you.'

'Harriette—' he began, but his words were interrupted by Dora's return.

'Well, at all events,' I thought, 'I have done *my duty*, and John can now act as he pleases.'

It turned out that it pleased John to go, and as the invitation was for the following week we did not settle into our old places, but the establishment generally seemed in a constant bustle of preparation. My brother ordered a number of new dresses as a pleasant surprise for Dora, of a style and material to which Dora *Marchmont* never could have aspired; and as, under the superintendence of the dressmaker, her maid arrayed her, first in one and then another, she came down and showed herself to John, who was waiting for and watching everything with the greatest interest and admiration, enough to turn any girl's head. At last all was finished, boxes packed, and they had started. The visit was only meant to extend over three days, but at the end of the week they had not returned. When they left The Cedars they were in great spirits, so perhaps, I thought, they are enjoying themselves too much to care about home. However, at the end of ten days they appeared, and the first thing I noticed was a look of depression on John's face.

Dora, on the contrary, was in wild spirits, and full of all the minute details of the gaieties of Woodsleigh. The theatricals had gone off with the greatest *éclat*, and Dora even had been persuaded to take some part in them. Besides the regular ball, there had been dancing every night, rides and drives every day, and various other amusements such as are to be found in a country house. Mr. Childers' name recurred again and again, and from this I gathered that all Dora's enjoyments had been either promoted or shared by him. What had my brother done? He smiled when I put the question.

'I met a good many old friends there, and Lady Somerville is a most agreeable hostess, allowing one to do very much as one pleases.'

'But you are glad to be home again?'

'Yes.'

(*To be continued.*)

THE UGLIEST STREET IN LONDON.

There were so many competitors for the unenviable distinction, that the task of deciding was by no means an easy one. Old Nichol-street in Bethnal Green presented itself with strong recommendations. It would, perhaps, be going too far to assert that its evil reputation came over with William the Conqueror, but there is no doubt that it may claim a remote antiquity. Its oldest habitations have acquired that peculiar hue of dinginess which invariably becomes the complexion of brick-work that has endured its allotted time; and from one end to the other, the street abounds with narrow entrances to obscure courts and alleys, which are blind to the requirements of decency, and deaf and dumb when called on as witnesses to the habits and customs of those who dwell therein. A person desirous of writing a book to be called *Life in our Hulks, Prisons, and Penitentiaries*, might save himself much labour, if, instead of travelling hither and thither in search of the required information, he confined his explorations to the shady neighbourhood in question; for without doubt he might discover there an almost unlimited number of individuals, male and female, who, from their personal experience and observation, could furnish him with all he might require. There are features of Old Nichol-street and its surroundings which, in their way, are unique. As, for instance, within a hundred yards or so of the broad and busy highway of Shoreditch, there is an open paved court, with six or eight little houses on either side, all of which are occupied by night-time prowlers, who lurk in the adjacent streets and main thoroughfares, and beguile men in the silly stage of tipsiness home to their dens to rob them. So well is the character of their lodgers known to those who own these abominable tenements, that they will not trust one even for so long as a week. The rooms of each house are let separate at the rate of ninepence a day, and every morning the collector comes and insists on the 'rent.' If he does not succeed in obtaining it, no further risk is incurred, but the lodger is summarily ejected. It is marvellous how such a condition of affairs, being known, can be permitted by the authorities. It is some months since I made the discovery; but, judging from the length of time the abomination had been permitted, there is no great hope that it is now abolished. The police were well aware of it, or, if they were not, undoubtedly they should have been, since I was taken there, and told all about it, by a well-known clergyman of the district.

But, after all, Old Nichol-street is not wholly ugly. In the midst of so much that is in the last degree vile, many honest weavers still toil at their looms for a living, and there are whole colonies of lucifer match-box makers there, with a good sprinkling of those useful members of society, costermongers, who, though not uncommonly classed by ignorant

persons with 'roughs' and thieves, are, as a rule, thoroughly hard-working, and as honest, perhaps, as the nature of their calling will permit them to be. With these redeeming features, therefore, it was impossible to stigmatise Old Nichol-street as the 'ugliest.'

Again. Certain thoroughfares in the neighbourhood of Ratcliff Highway bid promisingly for pre-eminence. And without doubt they were able to put forward claims of an exceptionally repulsive sort. Here may be discovered by dozens and scores, and 'all of a row,' the lurking places of the long-shore shark—everlastingly roaming about seeking whom he may devour, but with an undisguised predilection for sailor's flesh—together with the host of hideous petticoated creatures who pick the bones of the maritime prey brought home by the male hunters. It was not because of the abolition of Tiger Bay, the haunt of the opium-smoker and the hiding-place of the cut-throat Malay, when the police are after him, that Ratcliff Highway proved ineligible for the first prize. There are places still existing in this quarter—despite the operation of the Artisans' Dwellings Act and the requirements of the East London Railway—which, in many respects, are in no way inferior to that terrible 'Bay' in which unlucky Jack ashore so long suffered wreck and ruin as dire as any of his brethren who, in the old times, were wont to be lured to rocky coasts by false lights and treacherous beacons. But, as with Old Nichol-street, the vile population was strangely mixed with much that was passably good—dock labourers, sugar bakers, water-side labourers, &c., honest folk, though rough, the majority of them. Golden-lane, St. Luke's, came in for consideration, as did Peter-street, Westminster, and some three or four streets in the delectable neighbourhood of Seven Dials, and one or two within hail of the Sessions House on Clerkenwell Green. But after anxious inquiry I felt that I could not do other than award the palm to Lint-street in the Borough. To be seen to perfection, Lint-street must be explored at night-time, when the 'birds of a feather' who take flight in the morning return home to roost. In the daytime, however, one has a better opportunity of studying the domestic economy of that essentially 'slummy' locality. Almost from one end to the other, and on both sides of the way, Lint-street is made up of lodging-houses. It may be as well to mention here, for the information of the reader, who can know nothing about such shocking abodes of humanity, that so-called common lodging-houses are not all of a class. There are common, commoner, and commonest. The first mentioned are well-conducted places enough; the lodgers themselves being, as a rule, of the hard-working honest order, who have no 'home' of their own, and are unable to bear the expense of a bedroom and sitting-room in a private house. A common lodging-house of the better sort is, indeed, nothing else than a particularly plain and economical club-house, where, for the sum of about half-a-crown a week, a man or woman may find warm shelter after work-hours, with rough-and-ready facilities for cooking their food, washing their clothes, &c., and sleeping. But the orderly element prevailing, there is seldom any necessity for the police to exercise to the full the authority they are invested with over such places, according to the terms on which

a common lodging-house license is granted.

The commoner kind of lodging-house is that where sticklers for strict respectability are not earnestly invited to come in. These may be regarded as a kind of half-way houses between decent poverty and downright depravity; the latter being represented by the lodging-house of the Lint-street type. For half a century has Lint-street been notorious as the nightly haunt of the scum and dregs of southern London, and there appears but small prospect of its fame diminishing. There can be no question of the peculiar trade to which it is devoted having increased of late years. Metropolitan improvements provide that it should be so. By destroying a rookery you do not annihilate the rooks; you merely drive them away to form new colonies or augment old ones. A raid is made on Old Pye-street, Westminster, or on the draggle-tail skirts of the parish of Bloomsbury; slums and courts and alleys are demolished left and right, and the inhabitants of the surrounding neighbourhood rejoice that they are at last delivered from the plague that had so long vexed them: but others are the worse for the exodus. The objectionable ones, with their wives and families, do not remain without a lodging one single night; and of all things this is certain—that they will 'camp down' anew in a body, and in company with their own kind. As for the latter, so warm is their sympathy and so elastic their ideas of 'room enough,' that, the law allotting them space sufficient to 'swing a cat' in, they will make the cat a newly-born kitten and swing it with a short arm, so that the authorities may be obeyed and a friend in distress at the same time obliged. Nor is it easy to see a way out of a difficulty which daily is growing more formidable, inasmuch as the incorrigible alley-skulker increases and multiplies like the rest of his species, and not a month passes but sees some curtailment in the only places where he seems capable of living. It may be—as in the case of the horse-stealer, who put it to the judge that he 'must live'—that we 'really do not see the necessity;' but it will in that case be necessary to make persistent vagabondism a capital offence.

It is because Lint-street in the Borough seems to be so completely given over to this kind of population, that it is entitled to be styled the ugliest street in London. In the daytime, except for the principals and head-servants of the various establishments getting drunk at the public-houses, which of course abound in such a neighbourhood, the long crooked thoroughfare is not remarkable for noise or disorder. Judging from the condition of the dilapidated old houses, and the number of 'lodgers' they are nightly made to accommodate—lodgers who come from all parts, and who are as strange to cleanliness as to godliness—it might be imagined that sickness would be rife in Lint-street, and that the dingy windows festooned with a ragged coloured blind, which are dormitory windows, would, when the hale and hearty lodgers had set out on their daily business, show many a nightcapped head and pallid visage of disease or fever-stricken ones, who for the time were 'laid by.' But a wise provision of the common lodging-house Act provides against this. More, perhaps, for the prevention of the spread of contagion than for the patient's sake, it is ordered that no person may remain sick at

any lodging-house for more than twenty-four hours. Whatever may be their malady, if they still remain invalid after that time, the workhouse authorities are communicated with, and the objectionable person carried away. Nor is it likely that the owner of a lodging-house would make any demur to such an arrangement, since he is well aware that with his class of customers it is never anything better than 'from hand to mouth,' and if a man cannot get about to pick up his living there is small chance of his landlord getting his rent. It would not be the dread of contagion alone that would prevent poor fever-stricken wretches being permitted to lie with the healthy. And before I can quote a case in point, I must amend the statement already made that the lodging-house of the Lint-street kind is the commonest of all. There is still a more dismal depth to which human beings may descend. I cannot say if they may be found in any other part of the metropolis; but in the vicinity of Golden-lane, St. Luke's, are, or until recently were, to be found what are known as 'hot-water houses' or cooking-shops. The owners of these places do not pretend to take in lodgers, but for a penny or so a day applicants are permitted to shelter there, and use the cooking utensils. Sometimes, however,—under the plea, if it came to police-questioning, that they were the house-owner's personal friends,—they stayed all night, lying in rows on the floors of the rooms with their arms under their heads for a pillow. Mr. William Orsman, the well-known missionary of the district, on one occasion was in the dead of night sent for to administer dying consolation to a sick child at one of these awful places; and there he found the poor little creature, a girl of six or eight years old, in the mortal stage of scarlet-fever, lying on the ground with *fifteen* other lodgers, adult and juvenile, and who doubtless went their way next morning with their rags laden with the deadly contagion, sowing it broadcast.

As already stated, however, as far as is possible provision is made against such imminent risk in Lint-street. Indeed, to judge from the special feature which is made in the announcements of the lodging-house keepers, there is amongst them a disposition towards cleanliness beyond what might be expected. To be sure, much cannot be expected 'at the price,' which is fixed at that of the poor man's pot of beer—fourpence being the almost invariable charge. For this small sum, paid in advance to the 'deputy' who sits in his hutch within the doorway, a lodger may command the establishment to the extent of its means. There may possibly be—nay, there is no use in mincing the matter, there *are* a few outsiders in the lodging-house line in Lint-street, who are unprincipled enough to endeavour to draw to their establishments an unfair share of business by reducing the sum to threepence; boldly putting out handbills to the effect that at that reduced tariff 'every comfort of home' is obtainable, 'including the use of the frying-pan or gridiron, and the shoe-brushes in the morning for such as come provided with blacking.' Small matters make up the sum-total of the mighty world. The 'use of the shoe-brushes' may, at first sight, appear an insignificant item, and one not very likely to affect such tatterdemalions who seek Lint-street housing, but the smallest consideration will show that there are a large number who would appreciate the

boon at its value. The 'clean though poor' cadger of the out-o'-work-mechanic style of get-up would not overlook such a manifest advantage; neither would the dejected broken-down clerk, who, dumb-stricken in despair, stands in the same suit of threadbare black as he wore when it was his daily custom to mount an office-stool, the same well-brushed but shockingly bad hat, the same spotless cuffs and shirt-front. Nay, in order that there may be no possibility of mistake as to what was his respectable avocation before penury, coming along at ever so many knots an hour, overtook him, and swept him with simoom velocity out of house and home and situation, he still carries his office-pen behind his ear. He mutely submits to the public, as he stands meekly on the edge of the pavement, half a quire of soiled note-paper, a stick of sealing-wax, and two or three lead-pencils; but he has no idea of parting with these precious goods. Indeed, should a person show himself to be so outrageously hard-hearted as to require a pen'orth for his penny, the poor clerk, in a tremulous voice, will admit that the pencils are very poor ones, and he is afraid, kind gentleman, not worth carrying away. But, benevolent reader, waste not a sigh on this most melancholy of beggars. He is not always thus cast down. His business is a good one; and after his day's work is done, he may any night be found, in an easy jacket and smoking-cap, 'in the chair' at the 'sing-song' held at the Flinder and Parasite, where he is regarded as one of the merriest old souls in creation.

To return, however, to Lint-street. It is night-time there. Now that the days are shortening, the birds return earlier to roost. With the setting in of twilight, the narrow street becomes more and more alive. They do not come boldly trooping home, these cadgers and tramps, and persons who can give no more definite account of themselves than that they 'pick up' a living; that would be doing violence to their nature. They come sneaking in by every available side-way and back-way; so that, as unexpectedly as though they had arrived there up the sink-holes, you find them swarming on every side of you. They bring, excepting their professional rags, no evidence of poverty along with them. The chandler's shops in the neighbourhood do a thriving trade: prime rashers off the gammon, with plenty of fresh eggs, being in great demand, not to mention the best of butter and the newest of bread and the primest of old Cheshire cheese. They are dainty, these brazen-faced trepassers and poachers on the domains of benevolence.

'It is all very well to call a fellow an idle beggar,' once said to me an old gentleman who for upwards of forty years had followed begging as a profession; 'but I should just like them as can see nothing but laziness in it to take a turn at it and convince themselves. I don't mean for once in a way; but to go regularly to work at it, in a manner of speaking, as I do.' (He was attached to the street-chanting branch of the business.) 'Up one street and down another, with your feet splashing in the mud, and the perishing cold wind finding its way in at every hole in your coat and trousers; creeping along in the middle of the road from, say, ten in the morning till four or five in the afternoon, and perhaps in a neighbourhood where it isn't safe to put up for an hour and get a comfortable glass of something

the whole time. Why, it's a precious sight harder work than being a bricklayer's labourer, for all the fuss that is made about it.'

'And it pays a great deal better,' I remarked.

'Well, of course it do,' was the old rascal's ingenuous reply; 'else you wouldn't find so many being such jolly fools as to work at it.'

The common lodging-house kitchen is the only 'sitting-room' provided for the lodgers, no matter their number, age, or sex. Gray old grandfathers and grandmothers, matronly women with their half-dozen little children, hulking ruffians of the Sikes breed, bouncing brawny-armed damsels, lithe-limbed nimble young prigs—all are accommodated as one happy family. The furniture of the kitchen is neither elaborate nor costly. Only that it is shockingly dirty instead of scrupulously clean, it has something of the aspect of a barrack dining-room, with its long length of deal tables and its forms to match. The only other accommodation is an enormous 'locker,' a sort of cupboard fitted with pigeon-holes and made fast with a strong lock, of which the 'deputy' of the house commands the key. It is thoroughly understood, indeed none but a 'greenhorn' would dream of raising the question, that whenever a Lint-street lodger sees, or can contrive, an opportunity for appropriating his neighbour's goods, he does so without the slightest compunction. He will not even keep his itching fingers off the bedclothing of the establishment, and it is quite a common practice for the proprietors to have their sheets and rugs stamped, in letters as broad as the palm: 'Stop thief!' or 'Stop him! This was stole from Flannigan's!' The lodging-house keeper is not responsible for a lodger's goods. You may leave what you think fit with the 'deputy' before you go up to bed,—your boots, your cap, your coat, any portable property you may happen to have in your possession,—and you may rely on having them safely taken care of, and returned to you the following morning. With the above precautions taken, and with the remainder of his attire made into a neat bundle and laid pillow-wise under a lodger's head, he may close his eyes with some sense of security.

But the most remarkable feature of the Lint-street houses is the enormous fire that is kept burning summer and winter. Passing down the street at night-time, when the street-doors are open, the capacious kitchen may be seen at the end of the gloomy passage, glowing ruddy in the firelight, and adding not a little to the ruffianly aspect of the questionable characters clustered about it. But the best time for taking a peep at a Lint-street kitchen is when the earliest arrivals (and they, as a rule, are those whose circumstances are easy, inasmuch as they do not feel compelled to 'work' after early evening) come home, bringing with them their supper to be cooked. With thirty or forty lodgers trooping in in the space of half an hour, and each one sharp-set for his evening meal, and with only one fire available for the cooking purposes, it may be easily imagined that the grate which contains it must be a capacious one—not unfrequently it extends to a length of five or six feet, with a breadth corresponding. Those, however, who have suppers to prepare are not fastidious. There is but one great frying-pan, and in this are deposited at one time chops, steaks, kidneys, rashers of bacon, and sausages; the result of this promiscuous mingling of

meats being found to give a pleasant pungency to the gravy, which is fairly divided according to each depositor's substantial contribution. It is a stirring spectacle, when the cooking is at its height, to contemplate the tattered, dirty-faced, hungry mob, each with a plate hugged to his breast, and a knife in his hand, keeping a vigilant eye on his particular morsel frizzling in the pan, lest some larcenous fork should be presently stuck in it for its covert abstraction. On account of a frequent indulgence in this playful practice, it is deemed prudent to constitute the kitchen 'helper' master of the cooking ceremonies. This functionary is commonly possessed of muscular qualifications equal to the settlement of any serious disagreement that may take place between two or more lodgers; and moreover, as custodian of the frying-pan, he is armed with an iron spit, long and strong enough to impale an offender; but it is as much as he can do to maintain order amongst his clients until he is prepared faithfully to render each man his own. The difficulty arises from the process of cooking altering the complexion of the pieces of meat in the pan, and affecting the question of identity. The knowing birds of the dingy brood, however, are equal to the emergency. 'That's mine with the notch cut in the fat!' 'That's mine with the cross on it!' 'Drop that now, Larry! Yours is a littler bit, and I can swear to mine from its having a pin stuck in it!' But after all there is more of horse-play than hot blood and bad temper displayed, and in a short time no other sound is heard but the clatter of steel against earthenware, and the champing of voracious jaws.

It is not until the general supper has been disposed of that what may be called the tag-rag and bobtail make their appearance — the street-singers and players on musical instruments, the crossing-sweepers, the penny-paper hawkers, the cigar-light sellers, and the *bonâ-fide* 'tramps,' bound on a long journey and making this their halting-place for the night. It is not until ten or eleven o'clock, when the kitchen is full and the outer door is closed, that the fun begins: the song-singing, the story-telling, and the ordinary enjoyments of a common lodging-house fireside. No doubt all that can be done is done to keep such a dangerous assemblage in something like order, but to make them observe decency and decorum is simply impossible. This is terribly bad for the young folk, for the mere boys and girls who accompany their parents. As for the grown-up ruffianism, it is already as bad as bad can be, and no amount of evil steeping can increase the intensity of its ingrain dye; but for the children it is shocking. And by and by, the sexes dividing, the merry crews troop off to bed—the little boys with the grown men, and the little girls with the grown women; and in the dormitories the pretty stories begun in the kitchen will be completed, until, all of them worn out with uproarious laughter and wicked mirth, snoring takes the place of tale-telling; and Lint-street, the ugliest of the ugly, is asleep.

THE HOPEFUL PARTING.

FAITH and courage live in trial,
    Hope is strong as it is crossed,
Patience conquers long denial,
    Love still loves when it has lost.
Ever the steadfast soul—defiant
    Of the adverse might of things—
Rises up supreme, reliant,
    Smiting ether with her wings.

Not in fortune nor in season
    Doth it lie to bring dismay,
When the heart sustained by reason
    Out of night compels the day.
Not a parting though in sorrow,
    Not a threatening of the main,
Shall prevent the long glad morrow—
    Love and I shall meet again.

With strong prayers that take fruition
    Lingers thus the tearless bride;
Though she strains her constant vision
    O'er the troubled lengthening tide,
Till she peers beyond the glory
    Of the ocean like a seer,
And her heart has read the story
    Of all *he* will do and dare.

Autumn winds that loose her tresses,
    And light errant flecks of foam,
Seem but shadowy caresses
    Borne from his far floating home.
Present sad to future golden
    Turns, for Time hath naught to prove;
For she *knows* his hand is holden,
    Save for honour, her, and love!

A. H. G.

[See the Verses.

THE HOPEFUL PARTING.

THE HOPEFUL PARTING.

[See the Verses.

THE WINE OF SOCIETY.

STRONG men, we know, lived before Agamemnon; and strong wine was made in the fair province of Champagne long before the days of the sagacious Dom Perignon, to whom we are indebted for the sparkling vintage known under the now familiar name. The chalky slopes that border the Marne were early recognised as offering special advantages for the culture of the vine. The priests and monks, whose vows of sobriety certainly did not lessen their appreciation of the good things of this life, and the produce of whose vineyards usually enjoyed a higher reputation than those of their lay neighbours, were clever enough to seize upon the most eligible sites, and quick to spread abroad the fame of their wines. St. Remi, baptiser of Clovis, the first Christian king in France, at the end of the fifth century left by will, to various churches, the vineyards which he owned at Rheims and Laon, together with the 'vilains' employed in their cultivation. Some three and a half centuries later we find worthy Bishop Pardulus of Laon imitating Paul's advice to Timothy, and urging Archbishop Hincmar to drink of the wines of Epernay and Rheims for his stomach's sake. The crusade-preaching Pope, Urban II., who was born among the vineyards of the Champagne, dearly loved the wine of Ay; and his energetic appeals to the princes of Europe to take up arms for the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre may have owed some of their eloquence to his favourite beverage.

The red wine of the Champagne sparkled on the boards of monarchs of the Middle Ages when they sat at meat amidst their mailclad chivalry, and quaffed mighty beakers to the confusion of the Paynim. Henry of Andely has sung in his *fabliau* of the 'Bataille des Vins,' how, when stout Philip Augustus and his chaplain constituted themselves the earliest known wine-jury, the *crûs* of Espernai, Auviler, Chaalons, and Reims were amongst those which found most favour in their eyes, though nearly a couple of centuries elapsed before Eustace Deschamps recorded in verse the rival merits of those of Cumières and Ay. King Wenceslaus of Bohemia, a mighty toper, got so royally drunk day after day upon the vintages of the Champagne, that he forgot all about the treaty with Charles VI., that had formed the pretext of his visit to France, and would probably have lingered, goblet in hand, in the old cathedral city till the day of his death, but for the presentation of a little account for wine consumed, which sobered him to repentance and led to his abrupt departure. Dunois, Lahire, Xaintrailles, and their fellows, when they rode with Joan of Arc to the coronation of Charles VII., drank the same generous fluid, through helmets barred, to the speedy expulsion of the detested English from the soil of France.

The vin d'Ay, *vinum Dei* as Dominicus Baudoin punningly styled it, was, according to old Paulmier, the ordinary drink of the kings and princes of his day.

It fostered bluff King Hal's fits of passion and the tenth Leo's artistic extravagance; consoled Francis I. for the field of Pavia, and solaced his great rival in his retirement at St. Just. Henri Quatre, whose *vendangeoir* is still shown at Ay, was so fond of it, that he was wont to style himself the Seigneur d'Ay, just as James of Scotland was known as the Gudeman of Ballangeich. When his son, Louis XIII., was crowned, the wines of Champagne were the only growths allowed to grace the board at the royal banquet. Freely too did they flow at the coronation feast of the Grand Monarque, when the crowd of assembled courtiers, who quaffed them in his honour, hailed them as the finest wines of the day.

But the wines which drew forth all these encomiums were far from resembling the champagne of modern times. They were not, as has been asserted, all as red as burgundy and as flat as port; for at the close of the sixteenth century some of them were of a *fauve* or yellowish hue, and of the intermediate tint between red and white which the French call *clairet*, and which our old writers translate as the 'complexion of a cherry' or the 'colour of a partridge's eye.' But, as a rule, the wines of the Champagne up to this period closely resembled those produced in the adjacent province, where Charles the Bold had once held sway; a resemblance, no doubt, having much to do with the great medical controversy regarding their respective merits which arose in 1652. In that year a young medical student, hard pressed for the subject of his inaugural thesis, and in the firm faith that

> 'None but a clever dialectician
> Can hope to become a good physician,
> And that logic plays an important part
> In the mystery of the healing art,'

propounded the theory that the wines of Burgundy were preferable to those of Champagne, and that the latter were irritating to the nerves and conducive to gout. The faculty of medicine at Rheims naturally rose in arms at this insolent assertion. They seized their pens and poured forth a deluge of French and Latin in defence of the wines of their province, eulogising alike their purity, their brilliancy of colour, their exquisite flavour and perfume, their great keeping powers, and, in a word, their general superiority to the Burgundy growths. The partisans of the latter were equally prompt in rallying in their defence, and the faculty of medicine of Beaune, having put their learned periwigs together, enunciated their views and handled their opponents without mercy. The dispute spread to the entire medical profession, and the champions went on pelting each other with pamphlets in prose and tractates in verse, until in 1778—long after the bones of the original disputants were dust and their lancets rust—the faculty of Paris, to whom the matter was referred, gave a final and formal decision in favour of the wines of Champagne.

Meanwhile an entirely new kind of wine, which was to carry the name of the province producing it to the uttermost corners of the earth, had been introduced. On the picturesque slopes of the Marne, about nine miles from Rheims, stands the little hamlet of Hautvillers, which, in prerevolutionary days, was a mere dependency upon a spacious abbey dedicated to St. Peter. Here the worthy monks of the order of St. Benedict had lived in peace and prosperity for several hundred years, carefully cultivating the acres of vineland extending around

the abbey, and religiously exacting a tithe of all the other wine pressed in their district. The revenue of the community thus depending in no small degree upon the vintage, it was natural that the post of 'celerer' should be one of importance. It happened that about the year 1668 this office was conferred upon a worthy monk named Perignon. Poets and roasters, we know, are born, and not made; and this precursor of the Moëts and Clicquots, the Heidsiecks and the Mumms of our day, seems to have been a heaven-born cellarman, with a strong head and a discriminating palate. The wine exacted from the neighbouring cultivators was of all qualities—good, bad, and indifferent; and with the spirit of a true Benedictine, Dom Perignon hit upon the idea of 'marrying' the produce of one vineyard with that of another. He had noted that one kind of soil imparted fragrance and another generosity, and discovered that a white wine could be made from the blackest grapes, which would keep good, instead of turning yellow and degenerating like the wine obtained from white ones. Moreover, the happy thought occurred to him that a piece of cork was a much more suitable stopper for a bottle than the flax dipped in oil, which had heretofore served that purpose.

The white or, as it was sometimes styled, the gray wine of Champagne grew famous, and the manufacture spread throughout the province, but that of Hautvillers held the predominance. The celerer, ever busy among his vats and presses, barrels and bottles, alighted upon a discovery destined to be far more important in its results. He found out the way of making an effervescent wine—a wine that burst out of the bottle and overflowed the glass, that was twice as dainty to the taste, and twice as exhilarating in its effects. It was at the close of the seventeenth century that this discovery was made—when the glory of the Roi Soleil was on the wane, and with it the splendour of the Court of Versailles. The king, for whose especial benefit liqueurs had been invented, found a gleam of his youthful energy as he sipped the creamy foaming vintage that enlivened his dreary *tête-à-tête* with the widow of Scarron. It found its chief patrons, however, amongst the bands of gay young roysterers, the future *roués* of the Regency, whom the Duc d'Orléans and the Duc de Vendôme had gathered round them at the Palais Royal and at Anet. It was at one of the famous *soupers* d'Anet that the Marquis de Sillery—who had turned his sword into a pruning-knife, and applied himself to the cultivation of his paternal vineyards on the principles inculcated by the celerer of St. Peter's—first introduced the wine bearing his name. The flower-wreathed bottles, which, at a given signal, a dozen of blooming young damsels scantily draped in the guise of Bacchanals placed upon the table, were hailed with rapture, and thenceforth sparkling wine was an indispensable adjunct at all the *petits soupers* of the period. In the highest circles the popping of champagne-corks seemed to ring the knell of sadness, and the victories of Marlborough were in a measure compensated for by this grand discovery.

Why the wine foamed and sparkled was a mystery even to the very makers themselves; for as yet Baume's aerometer was unknown, and the connection between sugar and carbonic acid undreamt of. The general belief

was that the degree of effervescence depended upon the time of year at which the wine was bottled, and that the rising of the sap in the vine had everything to do with it. Certain wiseacres held that it was influenced by the age of the moon at the time of bottling; whilst others thought the effervescence could be best secured by the addition of spirit, alum, and other nastinesses. It was this belief in the use and efficacy of drugs that led to a temporary reaction against the wine about 1715, in which year Dom Perignon departed this life. In his latter days he had grown blind, but his discriminating taste enabled him to discharge his duties with unabated efficiency to the end. Many of the tall tapering glasses invented by him have been emptied to the memory of the old Benedictine, whose tomb may yet be seen in the principal aisle of the archaic abbey-church of Hautvillers.

Dom Perignon found worthy successors, and thenceforward the manufacture and the popularity of champagne went on steadily increasing, until to-day its production is carried on upon a scale and with an amount of painstaking care that would astonish its originator. For good champagne does not rain down from the clouds or gush out from the rocks, but is the result of incessant labour, patient skill, minute precaution, and careful observation. In the first place, the soil imparts to the natural wine a special quality which it has been found impossible to imitate in any other quarter of the globe. To the wine of Ay it lends a flavour of peaches, and to that of Avenay the savour of strawberries; the vintage of Hautvillers, though fallen from its former high estate, is yet marked by an unmistakable nutty taste; while that of Pierry smacks of the locally-abounding flint, the well-known *pierre à fusil* flavour. So on the principle that a little leaven leavens the whole lump, the produce of grapes grown in the more favoured vineyards is added in certain proportions to secure certain special characteristics, as well as to maintain a fixed standard of excellence.

Of the vintaging in the ordinary sense of the word, it is hardly necessary to speak, since the manufacture of champagne commences where that of other wines ordinarily ends. It will be sufficient to state that both black and white grapes are used; the latter, however, only in a small proportion. On consideration it will be seen it is no more phenomenal that a white wine should be made from black grapes than that a black hen should lay white eggs. To keep the raw wine nearly colourless, it is simply requisite, first, to avoid bruising the skins of the grapes during their transit to the wine-press, in order that the colouring matter which they contain shall not be set loose; and next, not to permit the wine to ferment upon the skins in the vat. The grapes, which are picked with great care, so as to secure a minimum of stalk with a maximum of berry, all rotten and withered fruit being thrown aside, are pressed without any previous treading, and the pale reddish tinge which the new wine has usually disappears after fermentation. With it, however, there too often departs the amount of tannin requisite to preserve the wine from certain diseases, notably the formation of viscous fibres. Doctors skilled in vinification attribute the disease to want of tone in the patient's system, and prescribe a strengthening course of oak-galls or catechu, or, better still, of an extract from the skins

and pips of the grapes, which is usually added as a precautionary measure to the wine in bulk. After pressure the must is allowed to clear itself in the vat, and is then drawn off into casks holding some forty-four gallons each. In due course it is racked and fined, *secundum artem*, usually in the following January.

At the close of the vintage hundreds of carts laden with casks of newly-made wine are to be seen rolling along the dusty highways, leading to those towns and villages in the Marne where the manufacture of champagne is carried on. Chief amongst these is the cathedral city of Rheims, after which comes the rising town of Epernay, stretching to the very verge of the river, and where those magnates of the champagne trade, Moët & Chandon, whose famous 'star' brand is familiar in every part of the civilised globe, have their half-score miles of cellars containing as many million bottles of champagne as there are millions of inhabitants in most of the secondary European states. No better idea can be given of the various processes through which the famed effervescent beverage passes after leaving the wine-press, until the bottles in their perfect adornments are ready for being despatched, than by following these processes, one by one, in the vast establishment belonging to this well-known firm, which already counts a century of existence, and far surpasses all other champagne houses in the magnitude of its transactions.

Messrs. Moët & Chandon have their head-quarters in a spacious château in that street of châteaux known as the Faubourg de la Folie at Epernay. It is approached through handsome iron gates, and has beautiful gardens extending in the rear in the direction of the river Marne. The business of blending and bottling the wine is carried on opposite in a range of comparatively new buildings, the white façade of which is ornamented with the well-known monogram, M. & C., surmounted by the familiar star. Passing through the arched gateway, access is obtained into a spacious courtyard, where carts laden with bottles are being expeditiously lightened of their fragile contents by the busy hands of numerous workmen. Another gateway on the left leads into the spacious bottle-washing room, which from the middle of May until the middle of July presents a scene of extraordinary animation. Bottle-washing apparatuses are ranged down the entire length of this hall, and some 150 women strive to excell each other in diligence and celerity in their management. As a rule, a practised hand will wash from 900 to 1000 bottles in course of the day. To the right of this *salle de rinçage*, as it is styled, bottles are stacked in their tens of thousands, and lads furnished with barrows, known as *diables*, hurry to and fro, conveying these fragile receptacles to the washers, or removing the clean ones to the adjacent courtyard, where they are allowed to drain, before being taken to the *salle de tirage* or bottling room. A steam-engine supplies the bottle-washing machine with water to the amount of 20,000 gallons per diem.

Before, however, the washing of bottles on this gigantic scale commences, the wine with which they are destined to be filled undergoes the 'marrying' or blending process, which is accomplished in a vast apartment, 250 feet in length and 100 feet broad, during the early spring. The casks of newly-vintaged wine have been stowed away during the winter

months, in the extensive range of cellars hewn out of the chalk underlying Epernay, and have there slowly fermented. At the proper epoch, these are mixed together in due proportions in huge vats, each holding upwards of 12,000 gallons. Some of the wine is the growth of Messrs. Moët & Chandon's own vineyards, of which they possess nearly 1000 acres, giving constant employment to 800 labourers and vine-dressers, at Ay, Pierry, Cramant, Le Mesnil, Verzenay, Bouzy, Saran, Moussy, St. Martin, Dizy-Champignon, Avenay, Grauves, and Hautvillers, their vineyard at the last-named spot including all that remains of the ancient abbatial structure, which was the cradle, so to speak, of champagne. The yield from these vineyards is, however, utterly inadequate to the enormous demand which the Epernay firm are annually called upon to supply, and immense purchases have to be made by their agents from the growers throughout the Champagne. All the wine secured is duly mixed together in proportions which will insure lightness with the requisite vinosity, and fragrance combined with effervescence. This process of marrying wine on a gigantic scale is known as making the *cuvée*, and each great firm has its own especial tradition for the different proportions to be observed in the blending. Usually four-fifths of wine from black grapes, to which the more solid vinous qualities of the blend are due, are tempered by one-fifth of the juice of white grapes, which have the merit of imparting lightness and effervescence. Among the wine from black grapes, it is necessary that there should be a more or less powerful dash of the vintages of Ay, Bouzy, and Verzenay; while of the white, the delicate growths of Cramant or Avize are essential to a perfect *cuvée*, which is thoroughly amalgamated by stirring up the wine with long poles provided with fan-shaped ends. If the vintage be indifferent in quality, there are scores of huge tuns filled with the yield of more favoured seasons to supply any deficiencies of character and flavour.

These, however, are not the only matters to be considered. There is, above everything, the effervescence, which depends upon the amount of carbonic-acid gas the wine contains, and this, in turn, upon the amount of its saccharine matter. If the gas be present in excess, there will be a shattering of bottles and a flooding of cellars; and if it be absent, the corks will refuse to pop, and the wine to sparkle aright in the glass. Therefore the amount of saccharine in the *cuvée* has to be accurately ascertained by means of a glucometer; and if it fails to reach the required standard, the deficiency is made up by the addition of the purest sugar-candy. If, on the other hand, there be an excess of saccharine, the only thing to be done is to defer the final blending and bottling until the superfluous saccharine matter has been absorbed by fermentation in the cask.

The casks of wine to be blended are raised from the cellars, half a dozen at a time, by means of a lift provided with an endless chain, and worked by the steam-engine already mentioned. They are emptied, through traps in the floor of the room above, into the huge vats which, standing upon a raised platform, reach almost to the ceiling. From these vats the fluid, now resembling in taste and colour an ordinary acrid white wine, and giving to the uninitiated palate no promise of the exquisite delicacy and aroma it is destined to develop,

is allowed to flow through leathern hose into rows of casks stationed below. Before being bottled the wine reposes for a certain time, is next duly racked and again blended, and is eventually conveyed through silver-plated pipes into oblong reservoirs, each fitted with a dozen syphon-taps, so arranged that directly the bottle slipped on to one of them becomes full the wine ceases to flow.

The scriptural advice as to not putting new wine into old bottles is most rigorously followed out with regard to champagne. For the tremendous pressure of the gas engendered during the process of fermentation is such that the bottle becomes weakened and can never be safely trusted again. Only the very best and strongest glass ought to be used in their manufacture. A glass-works, established for the production of glass by a new process, turned out bottles charged with alkaline sulphurets, and the consequence was that a whole *cuvée* was ruined by their use, through the reciprocal action of the wine and these sulphurets. The acids of the former disengaged hydrosulphuric acid, and instead of champagne the result was a new species of mineral water.

Upwards of 200 work-people are employed in the *salle de tirage* at Messrs. Moët & Chandon's, which, while the operation of bottling is going on, presents a scene of bewildering activity. Men and lads are gathered round the syphon-taps briskly removing the bottles as they become filled and supplanting them by empty ones. Other lads hasten to transport the filled bottles on trucks to the corkers, whose so-called 'guillotine' machines are incessantly in motion. The bottles are passed as fast as they are corked to the *agraffeurs*, who secure the corks with an iron fastening termed an *agrafe*. They are then placed in large flat baskets called *manettes*, and wheeled away on trucks, the quart-bottles being deposited in the cellars by means of lifts, while the pints slide down an inclined plane by the aid of an endless chain, which raises the trucks with the empty baskets at the same time the full ones make their descent into the cellars. What with the incessant thud of the corking machines, the continual rolling of iron-wheeled trucks over the concrete floor, the rattling and creaking of the machinery working the lifts, the occasional sharp report of a bursting bottle, and the loudly-shouted orders of the foremen, who display the national partiality for making a noise to perfection, the din becomes at times all but unbearable. The number of bottles filled in the course of the day naturally varies, though Messrs. Moët & Chandon reckon that during the month of June a daily average of 100,000 are taken in the morning from the stacks in the *salle de rinçage*, washed, dried, filled, corked, wired, lowered into the cellars, and carefully arranged in symmetrical order. This represents a total of 3,000,000 bottles in the course of that month alone.

The bottles on being lowered into the cellars, either by means of the incline or the lifts, are placed in horizontal position with their uppermost side daubed with white chalk. They are stacked in layers from two to half a dozen bottles deep with narrow oak lathes between. The stacks are usually about six or seven feet high and 100 feet and upwards in length. Whilst the wine is thus reposing in a temperature of about 55° Fahrenheit, fermentation sets in, and the ensuing month is one

of much anxiety to the manufacturer. The glucometer notwithstanding, it is impossible to check a certain amount of breakage, especially when a hot season has caused the grapes, and consequently the raw wine, to be sweeter than usual. Moreover when once *casse* or breakage sets in on a large scale, the temperature of the cellar is raised by the volume of carbonic-acid gas let loose, which is not without its effect on the remaining bottles. The only remedy is to at once remove the wine to a cellar having a lower temperature. A manufacturer of the pre-scientific days of the last century relates how one year, when the wine was rich and strong, he only preserved 120 out of 6000 bottles; and it is not long since that 120,000 out of 200,000 were destroyed in the cellars of a well-known champagne firm. Over-knowing purchasers still affect to select a wine which has exploded in the largest proportion as being well up to the mark as regards its effervescence, and profess to make inquiries as to its performances in this direction. Thanks, however, to the care bestowed, Messrs. Moët & Chandon's annual loss rarely exceeds three per cent, though fifteen was once regarded as a respectable and satisfactory average. The bottles remain in a horizontal position for about eighteen or twenty months, during which time the temperature is, as far as practicable, carefully regulated; for the risk of breakage, though diminished, is not at an end.

By this time the fermentation is over, and there begins to form on the lower side of the bottle a quantity of loose dark-brown sediment, to get rid of which is a delicate and tedious task. The bottles are placed *sur pointe*, as it is termed; that is to say, slantingly in racks with their necks downwards, the inclination being increased from time to time to one more abrupt. The object is to coagulate the sediment, to twist and turn it, as it were, until it forms a kind of muddy ball, and eventually to get it well down into the neck of the bottle, so that it may be finally expelled with a bang when the temporary cork is removed and the proper one adjusted. To accomplish this the bottles are sharply turned in one direction every day for a month or six weeks. Only a thoroughly practised hand can give the right amount of revolution and the requisite degree of slope; and hence there are men who pass their lives in this maddeningly monotonous occupation, and who have acquired such dexterity as to be able at a pinch to twist with their two hands as many as 50,000 bottles in a single day. Sometimes, however, twist they never so wisely, the deposit refuses to stir, and takes the shape of a bunch of thread technically called a 'claw,' or an adherent mass styled a 'mask.' When this is the case, an attempt is made to start it by tapping the part to which it adheres with a piece of iron, the result being frequently the sudden explosion of the bottle. As a precaution, therefore, the workman protects his face with a wire-mask, and assumes therefrom a ghoul-like aspect. In Messrs. Moët & Chandon's cellars as many as 600,000 bottles are twisted daily.

The usual entrance to these extensive vaults—which, burrowed out in all directions, are of the aggregate length of nearly ten miles, and have usually between 11,000,000 and 12,000,000 bottles and 25,000 casks of wine stored therein—is through a wide and imposing portal, and down a long and broad flight of steps. It is,

however, by the ancient and less imposing entrance, through which more than one crowned head has condescended to pass, that we set forth on our lengthened tour through these intricate subterranean galleries. A gilt inscription on a black-marble tablet testifies that 'on the 26th July 1807 Napoleon the Great, Emperor of the French, King of Italy, and Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, honoured commerce by visiting the cellars of Jean-Rémi Moët, Mayor of Epernay, President of the Canton, and Member of the General Council of the Department,' within three weeks of the signature of the treaty of Tilsit. Passing down the flight of steep slippery steps traversed by the victor of Eylau and Jena, access is gained to the upper range of vaults, brilliantly illuminated by the glare of gas, or dimly lighted by the flickering flame of tallow-candles, upwards of 60,000 lbs. of which are here annually consumed. Here group after group of the 350 workmen employed in these subterranean galleries—the ordinary staff of the firm numbering 500 people—are encountered engaged in the process of transforming the *vin brut* into champagne.

Viewed at a distance while occupied in their monotonous task, they present in the semi-obscurity a series of picturesque Rembrandt-like studies. One of the end figures in each group is engaged in the important process of *dégorgement*, which is performed when the deposit, of which we have already spoken, has satisfactorily settled in the neck of the bottle. Baskets full of bottles with their necks downwards, having been raised from the lower cellar, are placed beside the *dégorgeur*, who stands before an apparatus resembling a cask divided vertically down the middle. This nimble-fingered manipulator seizes a bottle, holds it for a moment before the light to test the clearness of the wine and the subsidence of the deposit; brings it, still neck downwards, over a small tub at the bottom of the apparatus already mentioned; and with a jerk of the steel hook which he holds in his right hand loosens the *agrafe* securing the cork. Bang goes the latter, and with it flies out the sediment and a small glassful or so of wine, further flow being checked by the workman's finger, which also serves to remove any sediment yet remaining in the bottle's neck. Like many other clever tricks, this looks very easy when adroitly performed, though a novice would probably empty the bottle by the time he had discovered that the cork was out. Occasionally a bottle bursts in the *dégorgeur's* hand, and his face is sometimes scarred from such explosions. The sediment removed, he slips a temporary cork into the bottle, and the wine is ready for the important operation of the *dosage*, upon the nature and amount of which the character of the perfected wine, whether it be dry or sweet, light or strong, very much depends.

Different manufacturers have different recipes, more or less complex in character, and varying with the quality of the wine and the country for which it is intended; but the genuine liqueur consists of nothing but old wine of the best quality, to which a certain amount of sugar-candy and perhaps a dash of the finest cognac has been added. The saccharine addition varies according to the market for which the wine is destined—thus the high-class English buyer demands a

dry champagne, the Russian a wine sweet and strong as 'ladies' grog,' and the Frenchman and German a sweet light wine. The dose is in some establishments administered with a tin can or ladle; but at Messrs. Moët & Chandon's this all-important operation is effected by the aid of a machine which regulates it to the utmost nicety. The *dosage* accomplished, the bottle passes to another workman known as the *égaliseur*, who fills it up with pure wine. He in turn hands it to the corker, who places it under a machine furnished with a pair of claws, which compress the cork to a size sufficiently small to allow it to enter the neck of the bottle, and a suspended weight, which in falling drives it home. These corks, which are principally obtained from Catalonia and Andalucia, are reckoned to cost more than twopence each. They are delivered in huge sacks resembling hop-pockets, and a large room in the establishment is set apart for their reception. Here, after being sorted, they are branded by being pressed against steel dies heated by gas, by women who can turn out 3000 per day apiece. A workman, the *ficeleur*, receives the bottle from the corker, and with a twist of the fingers secures the cork with string, at the same time rounding its hitherto flat top. The *metteur de fil* next affixes the wire with equal celerity; and then the final operation is performed by a workman seizing a couple of bottles by the neck and whirling them round his head, as though engaged in the Indian-club exercise, in order to secure a perfect amalgamation of the wine and the liqueur.

There is another and a lower depth of cellars to be explored, to which access is gained by trap-holes in the floor, serving to bring up and lower the barrels and baskets of wine, and by flights of steps. From the foot of these there extends an endless vista of lofty and spacious passages hewn out of the chalk, the walls of which, smooth as finished masonry, are lined with thousands of casks of raw wine, varied at intervals by gigantic vats. Miles of long, dark-brown, dampish-looking galleries stretch away to the right and left, and though devoid of the picturesque festoons of fungi which decorate the London dock-vaults, exhibit a sufficient degree of mouldiness to give them an air of respectable antiquity. These galleries, lit up by gas-jets and petroleum-lamps, are mostly lined with wine in bottles stacked in compact masses to a height of six or seven feet, only room enough for a single person to pass being left. Millions of bottles are thus arranged, the majority in huge piles on their sides, with tablets hung up against each stack to note its age and quality; and the rest, which are undergoing daily evolutions at the hands of the twister, at various angles of inclination. From time to time the silence reigning in these vaults is broken by a report resembling that of a pistol-shot, as some bottle explodes dashing out its heavy bottom as neatly as if cut by a diamond, and shattering its immediate neighbours. As the echo of the report dies away, it becomes mingled with the rush of the escaping wine, cascading down the pile and finding its way across the sloping slides of the floor to the narrow gutter in the centre. The dampness of the floor and the shattered fragments of glass strewn about show the frequency of this kind of accident. The broken glass is a perquisite of the workmen, the money arising from its sale, which last year amounted to no less than 20,000

francs, being shared amongst them, while the spilt wine, which flows down the gutters into reservoirs, is thrown away; though there is a tradition that the head of one Epernay firm cooks nearly everything consumed in his house in the fluid thus let loose in his cellars. The way runs on between regiments of bottles of the same size and shape, save where at intervals pints take the place of quarts; and the visitor, gazing into the black depths of the transverse passages to the right and left, becomes conscious of a feeling that if his guide were suddenly to desert him he would feel as hopelessly lost as in the catacombs of Rome. There are two galleries, each 650 feet in length, containing about 650,000 bottles, and connected by 32 transverse galleries, with an aggregate length of 4000 feet, in which nearly 1,500,000 bottles are stored. There are, further, eight galleries, each 500 feet in length, and proportionably stocked; also the extensive new vaults, excavated some five or six years back, in the rear of the then existing cellarage, and a considerable number of smaller vaults. The different depths and varying degrees of moisture afford a choice of temperature of which the experienced owners know how to take advantage. The original vaults, in which more than a century ago the first bottles of champagne made by the infant firm were stowed away, bear the name of Siberia, on account of their exceeding coldness. This section consists of several roughly-excavated low-winding galleries, resembling natural caverns and affording a striking contrast to the broad, lofty, and regular-shaped corridors of more recent date.

Amongst all this stock of bottles it is noticeable that the gay gold or silver foil and neat label, arrayed in which champagne makes its entry into the world, are nowhere visible. The wine, indeed, does not assume this toilette till the moment of its departure. Before it is packed off, a certain time is allowed to expire in order that it may become thoroughly blended with the liqueur. This period having elapsed, the bottles once more emerge into the upper air and are conveyed to the packing-room, a spacious hall, 180 feet long and 60 broad. In front of its three large double doors, wagons are drawn up ready to receive their loads. The seventy men and women employed here easily foil, label, wrap, and pack up some 10,000 bottles a day. Cases and baskets are stacked in different parts of this vast hall, at one end of which numerous trusses of straw used in the packing are piled. Seated at tables ranged along one side of the apartment, women are busily occupied in pasting on labels or incasing the necks of bottles in gold or silver foil; whilst elsewhere men, seated on three-legged stools in front of smoking caldrons of molten sealing-wax of a deep-green hue, are coating the necks of other bottles by plunging them into the boiling fluid. When labelled and decorated with either wax or foil, the bottles pass on to other women, who swathe them in pink tissue-paper and set them aside for the packers, by whom they are deftly wrapped round with straw and secured either in cases or baskets. Here, again, national prejudice comes into play. England and Russia are partial to gold foil, pink paper, and wooden cases holding a dozen or a couple of dozen bottles of the exhilarating fluid; while other nations prefer waxed necks, disdain pink paper, and insist on being supplied in wicker baskets containing fifty bottles each.

Thus completed champagne sets out on its beneficial pilgrimage to promote the spread of mirth and lightheartedness, to drive away dull care and foment good-fellowship, to comfort the sick and cheer the sound. Wherever civilisation penetrates, champagne sooner or later is sure to follow; and if the Queen's morning drum beats round the world, its beat is certain to be echoed before the day is over by the popping of champagne - corks. Nowadays the exhilarating wine graces not merely princely but middle-class dinner-tables, and is the needful adjunct at every *petit souper* in all the gayer capitals of the world. It gives a flush to beauty at garden-parties and picnics, and sustains the energies of the votaries of Terpsichore until the hour of dawn. The grim Berliner and the gay Viennese both acknowledge its enlivening influence. It foams in the crystal goblets emptied in the great capital of the North to the speedy success of the Russian arms, and the Moslem wipes its creamy foam from his beard beneath the very shadow of the mosque of St. Sophia; for the Prophet has only forbidden the use of wine, and of a surety—Allah be praised!—this strangely - sparkling delicious liquor, which gives to the true believer a foretaste of the joys of Paradise, cannot be wine. At the diamond-fields of South Africa and the diggings of Australia the brawny miner who has hit upon a big bit of crystallised carbon, or a nugget of virgin ore, strolls to the 'saloon' and 'shouts' for champagne. The mild Hindoo imbibes it quietly, but approvingly, as he watches the evolutions of the Nautch girls, and his partiality for it has already enriched the Anglo-Bengalee vocabulary and London slang with the word 'simkin.' It is transported on camel-backs across the deserts of Central Asia, and in frail canoes up the mighty Amazon. The two-sworded Daimio calls for it in the tea-gardens of Yokohama, and the New Yorker, when not rinsing his stomach by libations of iced-water, imbibes it freely at Delmonico's. Wherever civilised man has set his foot—at the base of the Pyramids and at the summit of the Cordilleras, in the mangrove swamps of Ashantee and the gulches of the Great Lone Land, in the wilds of the Amoor and on the desert isles of the Pacific—he has left traces of his presence in the shape of the empty bottles, with the star-surmounted monogram, that were once full of the sparkling vintage of Champagne.

THE ROMANCE OF OLD LONDON.

No. V. THE KING'S QUAIR: A ROYAL LOVE-STORY.

In the Choir, St. Mary Overie.

It may be scarce a year ago,
When Summer had his highest glow
Just pass'd, that I the bridge cross'd o'er
One morning to the Surrey shore
From City side; on business call
Intent, at some new warehouse tall
Hard by the river's rapid tide,
'Mongst smoking grains, within Bankside.
Arriving there betimes, I found
That he I sought for had a round
Just started on, that ere 'twas done
Would bring the day close up to one.
So, having thus an hour to wait,
And being almost at the gate
Of Marie Overie, midst the grime
Of breweries, with all my time
My own, at once I fetch'd the keys,
And stroll'd about and took my ease
Within that church where ne'er I tire;
And there I rested in the choir,
Among the lancet arches springing
From massy piers; and watch'd the flinging
Of sun-flecks on the worn stone floor;
And saw, beyond the wire door,
The wind-toss'd boughs and grass so green
Out in the churchyard, whence did stream
A summer ray, so warm and bright
It drew me to it by its light.
And there I stood against the door
That looks the Borough Market o'er,
And watch'd the busy life without,
And heard the salesmen talk and shout;
And saw the ponderous market-carts,
That travel up from distant parts
Of Kent and Essex (slowly creaking
Along the tedious miles); and reeking
With garden-stuff and brewers' grains
Was all the air. Two heavy trains
Pass'd by each other overhead
With noise enough to wake the dead.
And yet, in spite of all this bustling
Of thundrous life, I heard the rustling

Of flickering leaves and slender trees
That flutter'd in the summer breeze;
And once again I turn'd me round,
And trod the choir's foot-worn ground,
Where my slow step was all the sound.
And then I went and view'd the screen,
That eastward of the choir is seen,
Of Tudor work, in triple story,
Still fair, though shorn of half its glory;
And mark'd with care each quaint device,
The rich and lace-like canopies;
The carvèd angels, each from other
So diverse, yet like one another,
The Paschal Lamb and Pelican,
The emblems of the Son of Man,
With roses, vines, and twisted thorn,
And heads grotesque, that seem'd in scorn
To mock at each solemnity;
While, on the spandrils merrily,
Rude rustics chased, with none to blame,
Cony and sow at Easter game.
'Yea, verily,' said I, in praise,
'Good work they wrought in those old days,
And brains put they in all their fingers.'
And then I wonder'd if there lingers
Such power still, or if that we,
In these days of machinery,
Though ruling steam and magic wire,
Have lost the true artistic fire.
And then I sat me down again,
And for a space my busy brain
I granted leave to roam at pleasure
Where'er it would; and in my leisure
One autumn eve I sought it out
And track'd its course. It was about
A wedding in that very choir;
Concerning which a royal lyre
Had once been touch'd to tuneful air
In that sweet poem, 'King James's *Quair*.'*
A poem he wrote by Love's own teaching;
And Love still lives, and still outreaching
Are all our hearts in sympathy
To one who felt the same as we,
Although five centuries near have gone
Since saw the sun his wedding-morn.
But yet my mind is pierced with pain,
And scarce can I my grief restrain,
To think that I his quaint turn'd lays
Must alter much to modern phrase,
If I would have them read by those
Who little leisure have for prose,

* *Quair:* quire or book, from *cahier* (French).

And scarce can snatch of precious time
One minute for the simplest rhyme;
And only fit for Dryasdust
Would think this tale if spot of rust,
So dear to antiquarian mind,
Within its verses they should find.
Behold, then, plain as plain may be
(Although it almost seems to me
Like sin to spoil a poem so fair)
My version of 'King James's Quair.'

THE KING'S QUAIR.

'Anno 1423, 2d Henry VI.

This same yere, in the monthe of Feverer, Sire Jamys Styward, Kyng of Scottes, spoused dame Johanne the Duchesse's daughter of Clarence of hir first housband, and the Earle of Somerset, at Seynt Marie Overe.' *Old Chronicle.*

In those old days, four hundred years gone by,
When our fourth Henry o'er this realm did reign;
And Geoffry Chaucer's pilgrims still did hie
To Canterbury, and himself had lain
But five short years within the sacred fane
Of Westminster; and Gower slept scarce three
On his stone books in Marie Overie,—*

There was a king who did in Scotland dwell,
And Robert was he hight, the last and third
Of that ill-omen'd name; and writers tell
How weak he was in deed as well as word;
And how his brother Albany preferr'd
His interests to his lord's, and caused to die
That king's son David with great cruelty.

Yet had King Robert left one other son,
A little lad call'd James, but ten years old;
And fearing as the treacherous duke had done
Unto his brother he might be so bold
To do to this young child, he straightway told
His followers quick to take to France the boy,
Who there in learning might his youth employ.

But as the prince was well upon his way,
And that his ship by Flamborough Head did go,
It so fell out upon an adverse day,
As 'weltering waves' them tossèd to and fro,
That he was prisoner made by English foe;
And unto London brought, where he did lie
In strictest ward, while tardy years crept by.

* The head of Gower's effigy rests on his three books, *Vox Clamantis*, *Confessio Amantis*, *Speculum Meditantis*.

Yet taught he was, and tended in such wise
That, when that he to man's estate was grown,
A marvel great was he in all men's eyes.
Sweet music could he make with subtle tone*
And tuneful measures write. He was alone
In tilts and wrestling, and in deeper lore,
In jurisprudence, and the art of war.

With these things did they strive to hide the walls
That held him captive, sore against his will;
But in his heart he ever heard the calls
Of love of freedom and of country still;
The while his land and kinsfolk wrought him ill,
Nor strove to ransom him: thus he in vain
Sigh'd on from hour to hour in hopeless pain:

'The bird, the beast, the fish eke in the sea,
They live in freedom, each one in his kind;
And I, a man, that liketh liberty,
What shall I say? What reason may I find
That fortune should do so?' Thus in his mind
He mourn'd full often; but 'twas all for naught:
Thus was his deadly life fulfill'd of woful thought.

And all the live-long day and through the night
He would bewail his mis'ry in such wise,
That from his eye there faded all the light;
And all his gleesome youth was turn'd to sighs.
Darkness doth deepen ere the bright sun rise;
So when Despair had thick out-spread her pall
Then Love did come and swiftly changèd all.

And then the morn arose and shadows fled;
And then the flowers did bloom and birds did sing;
And all his hopes, that had been well-nigh dead,
Did all revive again, and on light wing
Forth flutter'd free; and every living thing
Did seem to joy with him, and did indite
A song of love which straightway he did write.

Wherein he tells us how one fresh May's morrow,
Despairèd of all joy and remedy,
Sore tired of his thoughts and all his sorrow,
He to the Tower's window turn'd his eye†
To see the world and folk that went a-nigh;
'Though for the time,' saith he, 'of mirth's glad food
I might have none, to look it did me good.'

'Now there was made, fast by the Tower's wall,
A garden fair; and in the corner's set

* He is said to have been the first to adapt Scottish melody to modern harmony and to have introduced it into regular composition.
† The Round Tower, Windsor.

An herbary green, with lattice long and small,*
All rail'd about; and so the green trees met
Above the place, o'er hawthorn hedges wet
With dew, that passing there for-by
Scarce living man might any wight espy.

And on a small green twist there sat
The little sweet nightingales, and sung
So loud and clear the hymns long consecrate
To Love's own use, now soft, now loud among,
That all the gardens and the high walls rung
Fill'd with their song; and thus they sang that May:
"Come, summer, come! O winter cold, away!"

And then they call'd all lovers to rejoice;
And then they stopp'd awhile, and, unafraid,
From bough to bough they flew; and no man's voice
Did scare them as they hopp'd about and play'd,
And freshly "in their birdis kind" array'd
Their feathers new, and peck'd them in the sun,
And thankèd Love that they their mates had won.'

Then did the king† again cast down his eye,
And there he saw, beneath his prison-tower,
Walking to take the air full secretly,
'The freshest and the fairest young-é flower'
That ever he had seen before that hour;
'At sight whereof,' saith he, 'there then did start
The blood of all my body to my heart.

And there I stood' (so doth he further write),
'Abasèd; and for why? My wits were all
So overcome with pleasance and delight
Only through letting of my eyen fall,
That suddenly my heart became her thrall
For ever—of free will; for of menáce
There was no token in her sweet-é face.

And then I drew my head back hastily,
And then once more I bent it forth again,
And saw her walk, so very womanly,
And no wight with her, only women twain.
And then I needs must to myself exclaim,
"Ah, sweet! are ye a worldly cre-a-túre,
Or heavenly thing in likeness of natúre?

Or are ye great god Cupid's own princess,
And are ye come to loose me out of band?
Or are ye very Nature, the goddess
That hath depainted with your heavenly hand
This garden full of flowers as they stand?

* *i. e.* slender.

† Robert III. died soon after his son's detention by Henry IV.; James was consequently the lawful king of Scotland, although the Duke of Albany and his son had long usurped the supreme power.

What shall I think? Alas, what reverence
Shall I address unto your excellence?"'

Then doth he of her further write,
And praise 'her golden hair and rich attire,
All fret-wise cross'd about with pearls so white,
And ruddy rubies gleaming as with fire,
With many an emerald green and fair sapphire;
And on her head a chaplet fresh of hue
Of parted plumes of red and white and blue.

And many a quaking spangle bright as gold
Wore she in likeness of a true-love knot—
So new, so fresh, so pleasant to behold.
And round her neck (too white to be forgot)
A slender chain of goldsmith's work, I wot;
And on her throat (more fair than falling snow)
A heart-shaped ruby like a spark did glow.

And for to walk upon that fresh May's morrow
An hook she had upon her tissue white;
But such her beauty was, it might not borrow
Aught from her raiment, she herself more bright
Than all her jewels; therefore with delight
I gazed upon her, yet withal with dread;
But from her steps I could not turn my head.

Now when that I had fully understood
She was indeed a worldly cre-a-túre,
It did my woful heart so much of good,
That it to me was joy without measúre,
My look into the heavenly land so pure.
"Ah well," said I, "were I her little hound,
That with his bells plays by her on the ground!"

Another while, the little nightingale
That sat upon the twigs then would I chide,
And say right thus: "Where are thy notes so small
That thou of love hast made this morning tide?
Seest thou not her who sitteth thee beside?
For Venus' sake, that blissful goddess dear,
Sing on again, and make my lady cheer."

Then, from the window, did I see her go
Beneath the sweet green trees with boughs low bent;
Her fair fresh face, as white as any snow,
She turn'd from me, and forth her way she went;
And then began my fever and torment.
Ah woe! to see her part, and yet to have no might
To follow her! Methought the morn turn'd night.

And all that day, until the eve did lower,
And Phœbus ended had his beams so bright,

And said at length farewell to every flower;
And shining Hesperus 'gan his lamps to light,—
There in the window, still as any stone,
I stay'd all day, and kneeling made my moan.

For so had sorrow seized both heart and mind,
That naught could I but weep and mourn full sore;
And when that night was come with chilly wind
No tears had I to weep, I had no more;
So had I spent that day their bitter store.
Then on the cold stone did I lay my head
Half sleeping, half in swoon, still as the dead.'

Now in his book the king doth tell us not
The course his true love took that smoothly ran;
But there were those it pleasèd well, I wot,
For Jane was niece unto that mighty man*
The Cardinal; who well had laid the plan
Whereby that lady Scotland's queen should be,
And he two kingdoms govern presently.

But none the less their love was true and pure,
Although, perchance, by man's devices wrought;
And day by day it wax'd more strong and sure,
Until the Scots at length their young king bought
With heavy ransom; and the English court†
Did set again their happy prisoner free,
To taste once more how sweet is liberty.

So in the winter cold these two were wed,
Within the church of Marie Overie;
And that great Cardinal in hat of red,
And all the monks of that fraternity‡
In black and white, with much solemnity
Full many a psalm and holy prayer did sing,
And made the arch'd roof and the walls to ring.

There by the altar many a face was seen
Of lady bright; but none that might compare
With that young flower, King Jamys Styward's queen,
Who by him stood and bloom'd exceeding fair,
A yellow crown upon her golden hair;
And well that king might kneel right thankfully,
To win at once his love and liberty.

So grand, so rich, so wondrous was that scene;
So throng'd that church with knights and ladies gay,

* The 'freshe younge flower' was Jane or Johanna Beaufort, the niece of the great Cardinal, then Protector of the kingdom, Henry VI. being an infant.

† James was a prisoner from 1405 to 1423. His ransom, or rather 'the sum charged for his maintenance,' was 40,000*l.*, 10,000*l.* of which was remitted by way of dowry.

‡ The regular canons of St. Augustine, to whom the church then belonged. Their dress was a white tunic with a linen gown under a black cloak with a hood. Cardinal Beaufort's hat and arms may still be seen on a column in the south transept facing the railway.

That all the carvèd angels in the screen
Behind the altar high (so might one say)
Did seem amazed; and some did fly away,
While some on heavenly instruments did play;
And some did clap their hands, and some did pray.

And when were duly ended all the rites,
Much feasting was there in the Bishop's hall
Of Winchester hard by, for days and nights;
And lordly presents lavish'd great and small,
Of gold and jewels, such as not at all
Had yet been seen in Scotland; and with these
Fair arras wrought with deeds of Hercules.

Then Scotland's king away from England hied,
And back in triumph to his land did go;
And with him went his beauteous, wise, young bride;*
And great rejoicings were there, and much show
And pageants grand; and all men, high and low,
For joy of heart with merry mouth did sing,
To welcome back their new returnèd king.

WINCHESTER HOUSE.—Winchester House, the episcopal residence of the Bishops of Winchester, stood near the west end of St. Marie Overie. Part of the massive walls are now built into a block of warehouses belonging to Messrs. Fitch & Cousins, which may be seen from the railway. Cardinal Beaufort was Bishop of Winchester, which accounts for the wedding-banquet being held at his house. It will interest the many travellers who may often have noticed the beautiful and curious circular window in the south transept of the church to know that it is an accurate copy of one which in other days lighted the Bishop's hall, and which was discovered in 1814, when a disastrous fire, burning down several of the adjacent wharves, laid bare the ruins of Winchester House. The window is a foliated design, on to which is worked a double triangle. Winchester House was built in 1107 on ground belonging to the Priors of Bermondsey, and had a park of fifty or sixty acres attached to it. During the Marian persecution, while Stephen Gardiner lived there, it was frequently used as a prison for those 'heretics' who were tried and condemned at St. Mary Overie. It was never used as an episcopal residence after the Civil War; but under an Act of Parliament, passed in 1661, was let to tenants, and gradually fell into decay. It may be seen in Hollar's View of London.

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* Of the lady's mental qualifications James writes:

'In her was youth, beauty with humble aport,
Bounty, richess, and womanly featúre,
God better wote than my pen can report:
Wisdom, largéss, estate, and cunning sure,
In every point so guided her measúre,
In word, in deed, in shape, in countenance,
That Nature might no more her child avance.'

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

THE LIGHT OF THE FUTURE.

Of the different sources of artificial light now in vogue, none can be deemed wholly satisfactory, although some are far more objectionable than others. Save among the poorer classes, the old-fashioned 'dip candle' is but little used as a regular means of illumination, although in many houses it finds its place for occasional use in the cellars and back-kitchens, especially in rural districts where gas is unknown. The tendency to 'guttering' and consequent spilling of grease when carried, the bad and inconstant light, and the continual want of snuffing have brought this form of artificial illuminator into deserved disrepute, notwithstanding its superiority over the yet more ancient rushlight. Oil-lamps, from the single round solid wick of the toy magic-lantern to the most improved form of moderator, are still largely used; and for freedom from unpleasant odour and objectionable heating of the air, and for soft agreeable light, there are few better kinds of lamps to be found than the best forms of the latter class. Good sperm or colza oil, however, is far more costly than petroleum, even when the latter is subjected to purifying processes of complex character for the purpose of improving the quality of the light or of diminishing the liability to explosion and other accidents from the volatility and imflammability of the liquid, and the evolution of unpleasant odours from imperfect combustion: consequently petroleum lamps of various kinds, from the humblest quarter-inch flat wick fixed in a rough glass bottle mounted with an inelegant chimney to the most elaborately decorated argand or duplex drawing-room illuminator, are to be met with everywhere. Wax, paraffin, and composition candles are preferred by some; the cost of these, however, usually considerably exceeds that of either petroleum or colza oil when the amount of actual illumination obtained is the same; and moreover there is always a liability to the dropping of melted wax on furniture, dresses, &c. For the illumination of large public rooms and workshops, the streets, railway stations, and the like purposes the above illuminating agents are practically useless, gas in some form or other being much more effective and less-costly. The faults of gas, however, as usually supplied from gas-works are such as to render this source of artificial light of very questionable benefit when introduced into private houses, especially into bedrooms, sitting-rooms, and libraries. As a rule, the gas thus supplied is generated by the distillation of coal, the quantity of gas practically consumed obtained from resin or other vegetable sources being so comparatively small as to be inappreciable. Now coal invariably contains sulphur, usually in the form of the brass-like mineral known as 'pyrites' or firestone, so called from the excessive hardness of some kinds of the mineral, caus-

ing it to strike fire with steel, and also from its combustibility owing to the sulphur present. The result of heating sulphiferous coal in the retorts used by the gas manufacturer is to give rise to a very complex mixture of products, some of which are of most offensive odour. Some portions of these products are condensed to liquids on cooling, forming 'gas-tar' and 'gas-liquor,' the smell of which is far from ambrosial; the remainder is a mixture of aeriform fluids of several kinds, the relative proportions varying with the way in which the distillation has been conducted and the character of the coal employed. Unfortunately these aeriform fluids always retain, even after the most careful purification, a small quantity of sulphurised compounds, which practically cannot be wholly removed by any processes that can be applied on so large a scale as that requisite in the works of a large gas company; and in consequence, when the gas is burnt the sulphur present becomes transformed firstly into sulphurous, and secondly into sulphuric, acid, which two acids consequently are disseminated throughout the air of the rooms in which the gas is burnt, to the great detriment of carpets and upholstery, bookbindings, pictures, gilding, and the like, the delicate colours of many dyed and tinted articles being bleached, more or less, by the first acid, whilst leather, cloth, silk, &c., are gradually rendered rotten and otherwise damaged by the second. A yet greater objection in the eyes of many is the peculiar smell which the ordinary coal-gas itself possesses; leakages from pipes and taps are always apt to occur, thus slightly impregnating the air of the house with the odour of gas, although to many nostrils the taint is imperceptible, either from natural want of sensitiveness, from the perpetual colds which the climatic aberrations of England render unavoidable, or from habit. Moreover one of the many constituents of coal-gas (the gas known as carbon oxide) is an absolute poison, being in point of fact the active agent in the fumes of burning charcoal, the deadly narcotic effect of which is so often applied, intentionally or otherwise, as a convenient means of euthanasia; so that deaths from the inhalation of an atmosphere charged with this gas, from the breaking of a pipe under the floor of a bedroom or from a tap being left incautiously turned on, are actually registered from time to time. The chances of explosion and fire from the formation of mixtures analogous to the fire-damp of the mine by leakages from gas-pipes into the air of a more or less closed space, and the detonation of such mixtures when a light is brought near, are not so small as to be inconsiderable, not a month going by without some such casualty, often attended with fatal results, being reported in the newspapers. Perhaps the greatest evil of all, however, is the high degree of heat and 'closeness' generated in rooms in which gas is largely burnt, and where no adequate provision is made (as is the case in most ordinary houses) for the removal of the products of combustion. The latter inconvenience is largely due to the character of the gas-burners employed, a portion of the gas escaping in a half-consumed state, and communicating to the air the unpleasant odour and taint characteristic of air breathed over and over again by a large assemblage of people; and for the same reason, viz. that the air is charged with organic matters. Even the best forms of argand burners, how-

ever, in which the combustion of the gas is facilitated by the use of a chimney and an annular burner, so as to admit air inside the circular flame, are not wholly free from this defect; the only radical cure for which, and the development of heat and of sulphurous acid, is the complete removal from the apartment of the products of combustion by special flues for the purpose. As regards the mere production of excessive heat, this is a needless defect in our gas system. By modifying the way in which the coal is originally distilled it is easy to manufacture a gas of much higher illuminating power than average gas now possesses; so that by the use of such gas the same amount of light can be obtained by the employment of a much smaller bulk of gas, and, which is more important, with the accompaniment of a much less development of heat. The bulk of gas obtained per ton of coal, however, would be considerably less than at present, and even if a higher price were charged for the gas, based upon the increase in illuminating power, the profits of the gas manufacturers would be usually somewhat lessened; accordingly, as London, in common with many other large towns, is supplied with gas manufactured by companies, this obvious means of avoiding one of the evils of the use of gas in private houses is not adopted. It must be borne in mind that this very defect in coal-gas as an illuminating agent makes it more appropriate as fuel; and that such an alteration in the character of the gas supply as that mentioned above would not be attended with advantage, but rather the reverse, to those who employ gas for cooking or heating purposes, especially as the tendency to smoke would be increased.

One of the most ingenious processes for combining the advantages of illumination by gas with cheapness and freedom from sulphurous emanations has unfortunately not proved successful on a large scale, although under certain conditions single houses and even factories can be satisfactorily lit up by its means. The method referred to consists in allowing a current of ordinary air, or of other permanent gases, combustible or otherwise, to pass through a reservoir containing the highly-volatile mixture of hydrocarbons distilled from petroleum at the lowest temperatures in such a fashion as to take up a considerable amount of the vapours of these bodies; air, &c., thus charged with hydrocarbon vapours can be burnt at a jet precisely as coal-gas. The weak points in this system are, firstly, that the hydrocarbons used are of necessity a mixture of substances of different degrees of volatility, consequently the air that first becomes carbonated is much more highly impregnated with combustible matters than later portions of air which pass through the reservoir when the most volatile portions of the hydrocarbon mixture have already evaporated, and when consequently little but the less volatile matters are left; secondly, in cold weather the hydrocarbon vapours taken up in the carbonating reservoir are very apt to be more or less condensed in the pipes conveying the gas to burners at a distance of more than a few feet, so that sometimes there is too little combustible matter left in the air to give a luminous flame or even to burn at all. This condensation in the pipes is, in fact, a well-known phenomenon with coal-gas. In cold weather a considerable quantity of the vapours mechanically retained by the gas are deposited in the mains and service-pipes,

often leading to partial blocks or complete stoppages. The consumer, however, has the compensating advantage that whilst his gas as it reaches him is of sensibly lower quality in winter than in summer (supposing that he lives at any appreciable distance from the gas-works, and that the gas, as tested at the works, is of the same illuminating power all the year round), he gets more of it for his money in cold weather than in hot—for the gas is sold by volume, so much per 1000 cubic feet; and there will be a greater absolute quantity of matter in a given bulk of gas, if that be measured when cold, than there will if it be expanded by heat, just as a gallon of water weighs more than a gallon of a rarer fluid, such as spirits-of-wine or turpentine-essence.

It is not wonderful, then, seeing the serious defects and inconveniences attaching to even the best of our modern means of illumination, that repeated attempts have been made from time to time to utilise another source of light, viz. that generated by electricity, the source of the electricity employed in the earlier experiments being the chemical action of the galvanic battery, with later ones mechanical motion (steam or water power, &c.) transformed into electrical currents by the aid of magneto-electric inductive apparatus. That a sufficiently powerful galvanic battery will furnish a current of electricity capable of generating a brilliant light has been known for many years; in fact, ever since Franklin's discovery of the identity in kind (but not in degree) between the lightning of the firmament and the sparks produced by rubbing glass, resin, &c., and Volta's and Galvani's experiments proving the identity between this frictional electricity and that set up by chemical agency in the forms of apparatus bearing their names (Voltaic circle, Galvanic battery). The most convenient way of generating light by electricity is to cause the current to pass through wires, at the ends of which are fixed two rods or slender sticks of a hard compact form of carbon obtained in the manufacture of coal-gas, as an incrustation on the upper parts of the retorts, &c., this carbon being, in point of fact, derived from the decomposition by heat of some of the constituents of the mixture of gases and vapours evolved. When these carbon-points are brought very close together, the electric current passes in the form of a continuous succession of sparks, succeeding one another at inappreciably small intervals, the ends of the carbon becoming white hot, and minute particles of carbon being continually detached principally from the positive pole; these portions of incandescent carbon give rise to an arch of flame extending between the two rods, and of dazzling brilliancy. As the rods gradually waste away their ends become separated; consequently the light would fade and finally cease, but for a mechanical contrivance, whereby their ends are kept at a fixed distance, the machine being regulated by an electro-magnet driven by the current itself. The current diminishing as the ends recede, the electro-magnet becomes weaker, and consequently less able to resist the action of a counter-balancing spring or weight which, coming into play, brings the carbon-points nearer together again, and reëstablishes the current. Electric lamps of this kind have been long in use; but their application has for the most part been confined to their employment as substitutes for, or improvements on, the

oxyhydrogen light for magic-lantern purposes, photography, theatrical effects, and the like, the chief practical use to which they have been put being the production of an intense light for lighthouse purposes. It soon became manifest that galvanic electricity is too expensive to render the practical application of the electric light for general illuminative purposes at all successful, and consequently induction currents from magneto-electric machines were soon substituted for the currents produced by chemical action: several forms of most ingenious machines for this purpose have been invented. For some dozen or more years past various lighthouses in France and England have been lit in this way, and the success of these first experiments has stimulated inventors to further researches, in order to utilise this light for illumination generally. Thus several workshops have been lighted at night in this way (for example, Messrs. Siemens Brothers' Telegraph Works at Woolwich; and the works of Messrs. Head, Wrightson, & Co., Stockton-on-Tees; and of Messrs. Ducomm in Mülhausen); whilst at several of the French railway stations, the quays of the port of Antwerp, the Avenue de l'Opéra, Paris, and many other places, experiments have been made, demonstrating clearly the applicability of this source of light to such purposes. For signalling purposes at sea, illumination of the land in the vicinity of fortifications to prevent night attacks, and analogous military services, the electric light seems to be specially adapted.

One great defect in the electric light as worked in the earlier experiments is, that whilst the beam of light emanating from the lamp is so brilliant as temporarily to blind an observer looking at it, the shadows are by contrast most intensely black; so that if a large space is lit by one single light, highly illuminated spaces and dark shades alternate, producing some confusion and want of clearness of vision. To avoid this, a number of lamps can be used in a sufficiently large area, so disposed that the shadows produced by one are illuminated by the others, and so on. The main difficulty in this arrangement is that either a number of magneto-electric machines must be used, or else the current from one central machine must be furcated into as many distinct branches as there are lamps to be lit; and practical difficulties attend the splitting up of the current, so as to get tolerable uniformity among the branches. Another way of overcoming the difficulty is to dispose a number of powerful reflectors about the illuminated space in such a way as to reflect light on to the parts left in shadow by the original lamp, and so to disperse the light about by continual reflection; this method, however, is not always practicable. Recently improvements have been made in the apparatus, whereby a furcation of the primary current into half a dozen sensibly equal branches is said to be attained; and trials made at the Magasins du Louvre have indicated the justice of the claim. These experiments have been repeated in London with a fair amount of success, both at the West India Docks and the South Kensington Museum; on the first occasion some difficulties were encountered from the defective condition of the prime mover (a steam engine), so that all the trials were not perfectly satisfactory. But by the use of a more perfect engine, furnished with a very sensitive governor, so as to attain a con-

siderable degree of constancy in the rate of revolution, and consequently in the current generated, much better results were obtained in the later experiments. The most important novelty in the form of apparatus thus tried consists in the relative disposition of the rods of carbon between the ends of which the voltaic arc is established, thus generating light. In the arrangements hitherto adopted, the two rods have uniformly been in the same straight line, usually vertical, so that one was directly under the other; the negative pole, which wastes most slowly, being usually placed above, and permanently fixed, whilst the positive pole is connected with a movable bearing, retained in proper position by the counterbalancing action of an electro-magnet and a spring, as above described, so as to keep the size and brilliancy of the voltaic arc tolerably constant. M. Paul Jablochoff, a Russian officer in the engineer service, devised the following arrangement known as 'Jablochoff's electric candle,' to the action of which the success of these recent experiments is largely due. The two slips of gas carbon are placed side by side, separated by a layer of nonconducting cement, of which kaolin is the chief constituent. In this way the distance between the ends of the carbon rods is kept constant without any machinery being required, whilst, moreover, the kaolin cement is slowly volatilised by the heat evolving vapours, which by their ignition add to the brilliancy of the light. The whole compound rod is placed in a vertical support, like a candle, whence the name. Instead of making the electric current branch itself, the several candles required may be all included consecutively in the same circuit, from four to six being readily supplied with electricity without difficulty. The 'candle' of course wastes away, the rate of consumption being about four inches per hour. In order to keep up a continuous light without requiring to change the exhausted candles for new ones, an ingenious switch arrangement is employed, where by moving a lever the current is turned away from the burnt-out candle and on to a new one, so that the effete carbons can be thus removed at leisure, and new ones substituted for them. When the brilliancy of the light is too great, ground-glass globes can be employed to moderate it, producing a very pleasant and soft light. The most noteworthy feature of the light thus produced is its pure white tone, the best gas-lamps looking quite yellow compared with it. As a result, it is quite possible to discriminate between the most delicately-shaded fabrics when illuminated by the electric light, the shades being as readily distinguishable as by sunlight. Gas or candle light, as is well known, never allows of certain tints being clearly discriminated; thus dark olive-greens, pinks, and blues all look much the same as black by gaslight, whilst light-cream colours and straw shades appear white. When illuminated by the electric light, however, each piece appears of its own natural colour.

Another valuable property of the electric candle is its ready portability—the actual carbons and holder being light even when protected by a globe; the whole is as readily transported as an ordinary lantern, due allowance being made for the trailing of the essential covered conducting wires. For unloading ships by night, where a powerful light is desirable in different parts of the holds as well as on the quays, the light

is admirably adapted. Notwithstanding the intense ignition of the carbons and the intervening kaolin cement, the candle gives out very little heat.

More recently still a yet further improvement in the 'candle' has been brought out, in which the carbon rods are altogether dispensed with, their place being taken by thick metal wires or rods. The kaolin composition is made into a thin plate about an inch and a half long, an inch broad, and a twentieth of an inch thick. Between the vertical parallel metal rods connected with the electrodes of the magneto-electric machine such a plate is slipped edgeways. On the top edge is fixed a thin slip of graphite, which becomes heated white hot by the current. The porcelainous kaolin composition is thus vitrified on the upper edge, and whilst fused will conduct electricity sufficiently to set up the electric arc. The plate wastes very gradually, at the rate of about a millimètre (one twenty-fifth of an inch) per hour. The light generated by this improved form is softer and mellower than that of the carbon candle, and also somewhat more steady and constant, although the flickering with the latter is much less marked than that of the best electric lamps hitherto in use; for household purposes, and where the most piercing and intense light is not requisite, this newer form of candle seems well suited. As regards cost, it is stated that four carbon candles will cost per hour about one shilling for the candles themselves, some sixteen or eighteen inches being jointly consumed. The engine-power required is two-horse, costing about fourpence per hour; so that, allowing for wear and tear of machinery, less than eighteenpence an hour is the total cost, whilst the light obtained is equal to at least 400 ordinary gas-jets, burning fully 1600 cubic feet per hour, and hence costing at least five shillings. If these statements are substantiated (and from the experiments of Professor Anthony, adverted to in a former paper on the subject,* there is good reason for believing them to be in the main correct), there seems to be a considerable probability that a few more years will see a great revolution in the system of artificial illumination adopted in our large cities. So imminent does a change seem, that a paragraph recently appeared in the newspapers stating that the municipal authorities of a certain town in Great Britain had decided not to complete the purchase of the gas-works, which supply the town with gas, from the company to whom they belonged, on the ground that it seemed likely that lighting by gas would shortly be superseded by electric illumination; whilst, for the same reason, a considerable depreciation in the price of gas shares took place immediately after M. Jablochoff's first experiments were made. Nevertheless, even should this result be brought about, it does not at all follow that the manufacture of coal-gas will come to an end; on the contrary, just as the introduction of railways did not, as was predicted by the pessimists, lead to the ruin of the breeds of horses, but rather tended to increase the use of horses for the purpose of conveying goods and passengers about, owing to the greatly increased demand for locomotion of all kinds, so it is not improbable that the disuse of gas as a means of obtaining artificial light directly would in the end rather tend to an increase in its consumption as fuel for culinary purposes, heating hot-water pipes for

* *London Society*, June 1877, p. 551.

warming houses and producing ventilation, driving magneto-electric machines, and the like objects. The gas producer also would then no longer find it essential to employ complicated purifying apparatus for the purpose of bringing down the percentage of sulphur in the gas to something within the maximum amount tolerated by law, for it would no longer be absolutely necessary to fix a low maximum. Moreover, in order to supply good gas for heating purposes, it would be by no means essential that coal of first-class quality should be employed, as much refuse vegetable matter now thrown away in our dustbins, lignites, and the like comparatively valueless matters, might be largely employed as a source of gas eminently suitable for heating purposes, although not well adapted for use as an illuminant; whilst the mixture of carbon oxide and hydrogen produced by blowing steam through red-hot coke (water-gas), which has hitherto been applied to no considerable practical uses, might be made cheaply from the impure coal or charcoal left from the manufacture of gas from such vegetable refuse matters, and employed either alone or mixed with the gases evolved during their distillation.

PHOSPHOR BRONZE.

The bronze of the ancients was probably not produced in the same way as modern bronze, viz. by melting together copper, tin, and sometimes small quantities of other metals, but by smelting impure copper ores, or possibly a mixture of copper and tin or other ores, whereby a complex alloy was in most cases obtained. Many of the ancient bronzes yield on analysis numbers indicating a composition more nearly approaching to brass (an alloy of copper and zinc) than to true bronze, whilst in most of them zinc is present to a greater or lesser extent. Modern bronze usually consists of one part of tin with from eight to twelve of copper, and suitable small quantities of lead, zinc, iron, &c., according to the purpose for which it is required. In these alloys considerable difficulty is experienced in obtaining castings of uniform composition throughout, as the constituent metals have a tendency to separate from one another, something after the fashion of oil and water when intermixed by shaking, though not to so great an extent. Further, the tin in the bronze oxidises very readily, and the oxide of tin thus disseminated through the mass seriously impairs the useful qualities of the alloy, and notably diminishes its tenacity and power of bearing strains without rupture. To avoid this difficulty phosphorus is added in small quantity to the composition in the form of a phosphide of copper, or of copper and tin, previously prepared and added in suitable proportions. The effect of this is to deoxidise the oxide of tin already formed, and to prevent the production of any more, the phosphorus taking away the oxygen from the oxide of tin as fast as it is formed. In this way a purely metallic alloy is formed (*i.e.* containing no oxide disseminated through the mass); the excess of phosphorus, if present in not more than a certain quantity, does not diminish the strength of the alloy, but on the contrary seems rather to add to it, just as a little carbon added to iron converts it into the much tougher material, steel, and as arsenic when added to lead in small quantity hardens and toughens it. A paper in which the practical applications of alloys thus toughened were discussed

and largely illustrated was recently read before the Society of Arts by Mr. Alexander Dick; five distinct classes of phosphor bronze were described, differing somewhat from one another in their composition, and hence possessing different properties, rendering them specially valuable for certain applications. Thus one kind is soft and malleable, and furnishes good wire, tubes, &c., superior to copper and brass for many purposes. Another kind is very fluid when melted, and is well adapted for castings; when cold it is more strong and elastic than ordinary bronze. A third variety is very tough and compact, and suitable for machinery that has to resist heavy wear and tear, such as piston-rods, pinions, &c., whilst the other two kinds are respectively adapted for making bolts and nuts, and the like, and for bearings for moving axles, &c. This last composition is of special character, being made by fusing together phosphor bronze and a softer alloy, which separate, to some extent, on cooling. The mass thus consists of a kind of hard skeleton of phosphor bronze, with a softer intervening portion, something after the fashion of the dentine and enamel in an elephant's tooth. It seems, however, that bearings of this kind have not given universal satisfaction, as it was stated during the discussion on the paper that when gritty matters get access to the bearings they do not last as long as ordinary ones of gunmetal, where some amount of zinc to harden the bronze is also present.

FIVE-O'CLOCK TEA.

The institution of five-o'clock tea is certainly one of the pleasantest and most sociable of modern life. Practically, ladies have always had tea at five in the afternoon. Our fashionable late hours are in reality wholesome country hours. They dine in the middle of the day, then they have their tea at five, and the dinner is practically a supper, more plentiful and more wholesome than an avowed supper, because it is taken at an earlier hour. We have all heard the legend of the country clergyman who dined at lunch, took five-o'clock tea, and went to bed as the gong sounded for dinner. A few hours after the established lunch, ladies like tea for its freshening and reviving qualities. It is really the same with men, only the men prefer to say that the tea gives 'a tone' to the dinner, as if it was another form for sherry-and-bitters. It was a lady's gracious and sociable thought that she would not take a solitary selfish cup of tea; but she would let her friends know that when at home she invariably took tea at five, and that there was tea for all who chose to come. The great drawback is that until ladies have 'their day,' as in Paris, you may go to a nice house and be disappointed of your cup of tea, as your hostess is herself taking tea with a friend. When the day has been fixed and invitations given, the afternoon tea is transformed into a kettledrum. That subtle domesticity, which is the peculiar charm of a five-o'clock tea, is lost. The refreshments are elaborate, and the music is that of a regular *matinée*. When it is not a concert, it is a *conversazione* of a limited kind. Either is good in a way, but the way is not so good as that of the five-o'clock tea pure and simple.

We prefer it even to the Parisian 'day.' Because when you go to see your charming hostess there is a constant stream of guests through the glittering *salon*. You see a great many people, but you do not

see your friend the hostess. Now it is the happiness of the English institution that you are asked to drop in at five o'clock, because you are appreciated by your hostess and her set. At a large party she must distribute her attentions impartially; but unrestrained conversation is possible in the afternoon; and you really want to see something of your pleasant hostess and her home-party. It is a liberal education to know her; she is just the kind of person whom Lord Chesterfield wanted his son to know, and any Lady Chesterfield would like her daughter to know. She has sense and wit. And if you store away anything of the kind yourself, she will be able to elicit such dormant electricity. Of course there are many men who 'drop in,' but you are always sure that there will be a predominance of ladies at the ladies' peculiar meal. Husbands who have anything to do, and overworked men generally, cannot often be present. There is a system of order and counterbalancing in the nature of things, and men who are thrown incessantly in the company of men, in courts, in clubs, in committees, cannot do better than amend their character and retrieve their fate by the five-o'clock tea. You get all the babble of the town, the freshest and brightest stories, the touches of character, the essence of public questions, the current criticisms of books and pictures, the secret history of the times. We do not say that there is too much of this kind of conversation in London or anywhere else; but it is sometimes to be met—very often to be met approximately—and never oftener than at tea-time. We know one great lady who retains the lost art of conversation in all its grace and grandeur. A music passes away when she ceases to speak; and in leisure moments we put down her thoughts and recollections on our tablets. This great lady—of course there were a peculiar set of circumstances—once had fifteen hundred callers within three days. There was a river of tea each afternoon. But once we received an invitation to tea in common with six thousand other ladies and gentlemen. We did not mind it once in a way; it was a curiosity in social life of a very big sort, but we should not care to undergo that crush of crushes again.

Tea itself is a subject that admits of more discussion and variety than might be expected. Sometimes you get a very wonderful tea which has been sent by private friends from China. Sometimes you get a tea which has been brought from Russia, and which came to Russia by the overland route. There is all the difference in the world between tea and tea. It is not that the overland tea is better than the tea which comes by sea, but that the latter is subjected to preparations which are thought likely to be beneficial during a long voyage. We think that the Russian mode of having tea is exceedingly pleasant. At the Paris Exhibition every one had the amber-coloured tumbler with lemon. It is a very pleasant change from the received method. We try to get it, but housewives are very conservative in their notions. Still, as we have the dinner *à la Russe*, why should we not have the tea *à la Russe* as well?

Tea and conversation are exactly the things that go so well together. It is just the gentle stimulant that produces the required effect. Indeed we have got hold of a really scientific formula in the matter: it is good tea that makes good talk, and as the tea deteriorates so does the talk weaken in exactly the same proportion. Tea is not a bad thing to talk about at tea-time. We recall the absurd legends of the

clever men who have sat up at night working, with towels about their heads and drinking copiously of hyson. Depend upon it, that sort of man never gets on. It is either a myth or a mistake; either he did not do it, or if he did he never did anything else worth speaking of. The best intellectual work is work done in the daylight. When tea first came into vogue lots of doctors protested against it. They declared that it might bring on paralysis. The country doctors say that the chronic use of tea among old women of both sexes is the cause of the indigestion that ruins the public health! John Wesley used to declaim against tea, and called upon his followers to join in a total abstinence league against the use of it. His teetotalism meant that people might drink anything else except tea. He had not the good fortune of our modern Templar; but his oratory, usually so persuasive, could not prevail against the use of tea, even among his most devoted adherents, and apparently great John found it best to give up the idea.

It is when you are admitted into the *vie intime* of a house that the tea is the pleasantest. You go, not to meet a crowd, but to have the frank, free, restful change that really does one good. A few friends drop in one by one, fresh from driving, shopping, and visiting; and the young ladies of the house, even though not 'out,' break the thin ice that separates their nunlike existence from the world. They will show you their last drawings, their last photographs, and sing you their last new song. They will talk to you of themselves and their family—of the boy who has got his commission or his scholarship, or the girl who has got her first offer; and if you break through your insular reserve and speak of yourself, you will meet with sympathy and encouragement. The western lights have all paled, but you have sat in the cheerful firelight glow till you hardly know how late it is. Presently there is the well-known rap at the front door, and your old friend, the master of the house, strides in, bright and eager to his heart, and shakes your hand. 'You mustn't think of going, old man; we dine in an hour, and are all by ourselves.' This is sometimes the cheerful *finale* of the afternoon tea. There is a murmur of lively voices, a battery of inviting eyes, and the thing is settled. Very pleasant is the dinner, but perhaps you were better pleased with the five-o'clock tea.

NEW BOOKS.

Within the last few weeks a flood of information has been poured upon the social, domestic, and financial condition of Egypt. Every year has had its writers on Egypt, which from time immemorial has possessed a wonderful fascination for the human mind; but since the time when Mr. Lane first wrote his charming books, there have been no writers till quite recently who have familiarised us with the modern aspect of the country.

In addition to Mr. McCoan's work, which we were glad to welcome some time ago, we have now another interesting volume,* travelling over precisely the same ground, and by combining the two volumes we obtain a view of stereoscopic accuracy and liveliness. The most interesting and vivid part of M. de Léon's book will be found in the vivid portraits, which sometimes approach caricature, of the people

* *The Khedive's Egypt, or the Old House of Bondage under New Masters.* By Edwin de Léon. (Sampson Low & Co.)

who have principally figured in recent Egyptian history, such as Nubar Pasha, Cherif Pasha, and the late abominable Moufettish Ismail Sadyk, and of course we hear much about Mehemet Ali and M. de Lesseps. It is interesting to compare the contradictions as well as the concords of the two works. Mr. McCoan writes almost as if holding a brief on the Egyptian side of things. He has had every help from the Government. He bristles with facts and figures. He has all the statistics at his fingers' ends. We have just a modicum of distrust for his work, as coloured by his good wishes and by the good treatment he has experienced, but do not for a moment suppose that he is otherwise than perfectly honest and impartial. Though perhaps a more solid, he is by no means so lifelike and entertaining a writer as M. de Léon. But while the two writers have the same ground in common, as we have said, they hold it in much contradiction. Although M. de Léon gives us a less exact narrative, he appears to have had a longer acquaintance with the country than Mr. McCoan, having been American Consul-General under three successive Viceroys, and his portraits of the three, as we have intimated, are very vivid and somewhat sensational. The question of slavery is one which has especially emerged into notice since these books were written. It is professedly abolished in Turkey, but Mr. Gallenga has lately been telling the world how it still exists in Constantinople. M. de Léon has an interesting chapter on the equatorial empire of Egypt. As a matter of fact, Egypt has no *de facto* possession of the new empire to which it has advanced such a monstrous claim. It has with difficulty preserved its communications with its expeditions, and at present has only a single steamer on a single lake. It is not the cause of the slave which has urged Egypt on in its expeditions towards Abyssinia and the Central Lakes. It is the Khedive's lust for territory, or rather, according to M. de Léon, his impressionableness to anything that promises to bring in money. M. de Léon tells us that the Khedive, of whose hospitality and wines he has liberally partaken, has three manias—'a passion for real estate, a vaulting ambition, and a mania for building.' But these two writers are either not in possession of, or do not wish to remind us of, the real facts in respect to the Khedive's endeavours to abolish slavery with the help of Englishmen. We should like the public creditors of Egypt to keep a strict watch on the Khedive's lust for territory. M. de Léon writes with great sympathy respecting the unjust and degraded condition of the Egyptian fellaheen. 'The Egyptian labourer has not risen much above the level of that life we see sculptured on the walls of the old tombs and temples thousands of years ago. He is still in the hands of merciless taskmasters—a strong ass crouching under burdens.' Those who have read Mr. McCoan's book will do well to compare M. de Léon's with it. The subject is a mine comparatively unworked, and might well elicit even another work.

Dr. Willis, who has earned his spurs as the biographer of Spinoza, has opened up new and original ground in discussing the life and death of the unfortunate Servetus.* He has made use of a large mass of original documents. Nothing

* *Servetus and Calvin: a Study of an Important Epoch in the Early History of the Reformation.* By R. Willis, M.D. (Henry S. King & Co.)

THE MODERN ZODIAC:

AN ARTIST'S ALMANAC OF ENGLISH SOCIETY.

is more interesting in the literature of the present day than the mode in which ancient State documents have been sifted and published, and a whole flood of illustration poured forth on events only imperfectly comprehended by contemporaries. Dr. Willis has a theory to prove that Calvin was the means of putting Servetus to death, and this, not in consequence of the intolerant and persecuting spirit which then pervaded nearly all religious life and thought, but through private grudge, enmity, and revenge. As we only hear Dr. Willis's, and are hardly in a position to get Calvin's, side of the question, we must decline to adjudicate. Dr. Willis has given a genuine instance of historical investigation, and what he tells us of Servetus's anticipation of Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood is highly curious and interesting.

One of the most interesting and complete books of the kind which we have seen for a long time is Dr. Rink's monograph on *Danish Greenland.** All those who recollect how frequently Disco and Greenland have been mentioned in our own Arctic expeditions will be interested in such a work. There is now no doubt that the Danes discovered America centuries before Columbus or Vespucci. This is abundantly proved both by the Icelandic sagas and also by the remains of the old Danish churches and other edifices. Greenland itself, though generally supposed to be part of America, is more probably an island or cluster of islands. Dr. Rink, who is the Director of the Royal Greenland Board of Trade, has already given us a most excellent work on the Eskimo, and his present exhaustive monograph will leave nothing to be said by any future writer. The work is so full of matter, that to give a fair summary would be like abbreviating an index. The true hero of the story of Greenland is Egede the Danish missionary, and his work is taken up and sustained by the Moravian missions. The geographical contrasts of the country are of the most violent character. Entering the fjords we have verdant valleys, wooded slopes, and luxuriant vegetation; but penetrating beyond the margin, we have the boundless icy plateau of the Arctic zone. Dr. Rink tells us that the whole mass of floating icebergs are exclusively discharged from the inland ice. The author deals very fully both with the natives and the Danish settlers. The reindeer meat has now ceased to be in daily use, but the quantity of seal taken is prodigious. Eight pounds a year gives an income for a family. We had marked many passages for reference or quotation; but we by all means advise our readers to refer to the work, to which we can give a most thorough and hearty recommendation.

* *Danish Greenland: its People and its Products.* By Dr. Henry Rink. Edited by Dr. Robert Brown. (Henry S. King & Co.)

CHAPTER XXVII.

DEAD-SEA FRUIT.

I COME now to the nearest approach to an adventure that I ever had in my life.

Three days had gone by, outwardly tranquil, but for me all one feverish unnatural dream of most morbid pleasure; nerves and brain stirred and strung up to that pitch when they refuse to relax, and to allow of rest or sleep. To counteract the strain, and set the balance of being to rights again, I would try ways of tiring myself out, developing a taste for open-air exercise that surprised everybody. I wanted to exhaust myself physically, till I should have no strength left for thinking and feeling, and Nature herself must enforce a vegetative repose. I learned to row, dragged Eva out for long walks before breakfast over the Seckendorf estates—anything to still this cold excitement vibrating within me night and day.

The present ordeal was so new, so unthought of, that it found me quite off my guard, as against an unrecognised adversary, who first pulls out his weapon when he is close upon you. There is a dire fascination, the fascination of evil, as of something strange and untried, which, like vertigo when we look into deep water or over a precipice, takes hold of the spirit unawares, tempting it and drawing it down into the giddy vortex of the game of self.

The third day was intensely hot and sultry. Sophie and Hilda towards two o'clock established themselves out on the lawn for the afternoon. They had become fairly friendly lately, since Hilda had been pleased to drop her haughty nonchalance of manner, and one subject at least they had in common, upon which they could talk by the hour and never tire or quarrel—the subject of dress.

Coming into the billiard-room, I found it empty. But Jasper had just been there, I knew; the volume of Heine he was reading lay open on the table, a half-finished piece of music he was copying for me beside it.

He would return in an instant. My first impulse was to seat myself at the open piano as usual, run through song upon song, with words and without; a prelude to an afternoon like the last and the one before. My second, which I obeyed, was to take my garden-hat, and promptly, before he reappeared or Sophie and Hilda had seen me, to slip out of the house, resolute to free myself for a few hours from the sweet captivity of Castle Adlerberg.

Eva was sketching at the Swallow's Nest, and my original intention had been to go there and join her.

But a wayward fancy seized me to take a long walk first, and, yielding at once to the caprice, I struck into the next path that offered itself, one leading out into the country and away from the Seckendorf estate.

As if from sheer perversity I had chosen the least attractive route of all, a walk nobody ever took, and no wonder. To begin with, it was

lonely and monotonous; the road, which was execrable, meandered on for miles through dull country, without leading to anything of the faintest interest at last, and the wayfarer must perforce return the same way by which he came. Probably Sophie had never been a mile along it in her life. The castle inmates seldom cared to stray out of their own grounds, which extended for miles in other directions. Who, indeed, with such a park as Adlerberg boasted under their windows—Adlerberg with its river, ruins, rocks, and hills—would dream, except by way of a penance, of making a pilgrimage along a dreary road, that dwindled in time to a drearier foot-path leading across potato-fields and barren hills to a few wretched cottages?

As I said, no one ever did, and I had but a dim idea of where it would land me as, forgetting Eva and the Swallow's Nest, I trudged along, until I had put three miles between me and Castle Adlerberg. But the bleak ugliness of the scene was almost congenial that day. Beauty sickens us at certain seasons. There is a time for daffodils and marigolds, for roses and pomegranates, and there is also a time for thorns and briers, gall and wormwood; things quite as real, more enduring, and as worthy a poet's theme.

I was unceremoniously recalled to the world of prose by the sudden bursting of a heavy shower. Though prepared for rough roads, and half enjoying their discomfort, I had forgotten the weather, and never paid attention to the long-gathering thunderclouds overhead. A violent storm now caught me half-way across a shelterless common, and in a few minutes I was wet to the skin. I ran for some cottages I saw in the distance, but long before I could reach them the rain had done its worst. The group of mud and plaster habitations huddled together before me I recognised as the little hamlet of Neudorf, which I knew by name as the first to be met with in this direction. The girls of one or two of the poor families there made lace, and from time to time came round to the castle to try and sell it. They had appeared there very often lately; for Hilda had taken an immense fancy to this commodity, purchased a good deal on each occasion, and given an order for more.

I saw standing in a doorway a girl whom I remembered as having brought over her wares to Mrs. Gerard a day or two ago. So I accosted her and asked for a shelter, adding that I came from Castle Adlerberg. She called her mother, who received me most hospitably, moved with much pity for my dripping condition. My garments, alas, were past drying except by a furnace, and there was no fire in the cottage. However, the eldest daughter's best Sunday and saints'-day gown was brought out, and I was entreated to try it on. I arrayed myself provisionally in the bright-coloured stuff skirt, black jacket, apron, and thick shoes, even tying a variegated cotton handkerchief round my head to complete the disguise and amuse my hosts and myself.

Whilst I sat chatting to the woman as fluently as my scanty acquaintance with her peculiar *patois* permitted, there came a loud knock at the outer door. She went to open, and a long parley ensued between her and the visitor. I heard a man's voice speaking in accents of broken German. It riveted my attention, it sounded so familiar. Yet so inconceivable was the supposition that I should meet that voice

here, that I failed to put a name to it for the first moment.

One of the children who had remained in the room peeped out of the window, and explained to me that it was a strange gentleman, a traveller who had borrowed an umbrella of them a few days ago, and had come to return it.

That was simple and humdrum, indeed; but whose voice was that?

The next minute he walked straight into the room where I sat—Leopold Meredith.

I was thunderstruck, but not so aghast but I marked the cool careless air with which he sauntered in, as if familiar here already. I turned away sharply and kept my face carefully averted, but my disguise rendered but slight precaution necessary. He never looked at me. The peasant-girl, to him, was worth no more scrutiny than the clumsy table, broken chairs, and kitchen pots and pans. The good woman, for her part, concluding, no doubt, that I was ashamed to be seen by a gentleman in my rustic habiliments, said and did nothing to draw his attention to me.

He stayed for a few minutes, rewarding the peasant's wife right royally for the loan of the umbrella, and then departed, mother and children reverentially ushering their benefactor to the door.

'Pray who may that gentleman be?' I inquired of the woman when she returned. 'How comes he in these parts?'

Very innocently she explained that he was an English tourist, staying, she supposed, at Rosenbad, a town some six miles farther on, where travellers came occasionally sketching, fishing, botanising, or collecting stones; she was not very clear on the subject, but whatever she did not know she took for granted.

I watched her and the girl narrowly, questioned them as closely as I dared, and soon felt convinced of their ignorance of their visitor's identity. They were all honesty and stupidity. Their information and ideas barely went beyond their cluster of cottages and the little allotments attached.

Sophie and her father had been more than a name for them in the former's maiden days, when now and then in hard seasons she had played the Lady Bountiful to her poor neighbours. But never since her marriage had she appeared at Adlerberg till this summer. As for her husband, he was an abstract idea to the cottagers. He might be old or he might be young, a German or a Turk—they did not even know his name; Leopold's shooting and deer-stalking excursions would certainly never have brought him in this direction.

As for this Englishman, this visitor, he was evidently on a walking tour. There would pass at least two or three of his kind every year, and Neudorf had ceased to wonder at such apparitions. There is an ignorance so dense that it stops short of gossip, conjecture, or curiosity, and remains quite satisfied with itself.

'Now what object on earth can Mr. Meredith, whom we thought still at Ludwigsheim, have for playing off this little farce upon us?' I mused silently, puzzled.

The old dame meanwhile had taken up her knitting, and forthwith became more garrulous and confidential.

'Ah, to be sure, and the gentleman has friends at the castle,' she said, looking up; 'the gracious lady may have met him there. I even think he said he had been over to see them yesterday. To-day he has left this parcel for

my girl to take when she goes to-morrow with the lace. Perhaps the gracious lady would like to see.'

And she brought it out unsuspiciously. The address was in a disguised handwriting, to a Miss Harvey in London, 'care of Mrs. Gerard, Castle Adlerberg;' and the contents, I should have said, were a letter, nothing more.

I stared at the sealed paper, and the reality of what a suspicious fancy had forecast flashed upon me all at once with blinding, scathing force. An indescribable horror, a sensation of sickening disgust, followed. I felt ashamed to live. If the reckless effrontery of the intrigue had confounded me for the first moment, there came a reaction quickly enough, in an insight into its full ugliness and iniquity. The odious duplicity, the false lulling of poor Sophie's irritated and too well-founded jealousy, Leopold's departure a blind for stolen communications, perhaps for stolen interviews,—it all revolted me past expression. O, the selfish wickedness of two people, sacrificing and duping those nearest to them; egotists who all the while put in their claim—a claim that no one was allowed to dispute—to be respected, honoured, loved, by their own dupes!

The fear of anything, however vivid or imminent, is worlds removed from the impression of the actual catastrophe. The whole drama that had been slowly evolving itself these last few weeks at Adlerberg, and in which I too had been more than a mere shocked spectator, now first stood before me plainly, stripped of gloss and glamour, in its native hideousness.

There was Leopold, playing false to his wife, who had done him no wrong; Hilda deceiving her husband. How would it end? There was worse than this; the path, dark as it was, had yet darker windings. Leopold's part had a dash of malignancy in it to make it thoroughly odious. Instinctively I doubted the unmixed nature of his feeling to Mrs. Gerard. I detected that he had not forgiven her. Indeed her nature, charms and all, was not of that temper which stirs up the forgiving principle in us. He would have liked her now to compromise herself for him, for the man she had professed to hold cheap; let her feel and have to own herself the slave of his will, repenting that in the past she played with him and then threw him overboard. Better not ask to what such a labyrinth of evil will lead at last.

And I?

The spectacle of another, self-abandoned to those waves of ill, had awakened me suddenly to a true view of the treacherous sea on the edge of which I myself had been standing. Such a shock roughly brushes the film from the mind's eye, and the mind shrinks appalled and ashamed at the first faint symptoms that one has been tampering with one's spiritual honesty.

You detect your neighbour cheating at cards, and turn your back upon him henceforth as a swindler. *Your* game has been fair and open. Good. But there are insidious games to which honest players may not put their hand without damage to their honesty, and I, to say the least, had willingly sought and dared just such a pernicious influence.

That proud numbness of heart, on which I had relied as a shield, whilst on the one hand it took away what excuse a master passion can give, on the other, how long would it last? For who shall say where temerity ends and madness begins? Instinctively as I

thought I put my hand before my eyes.

All this went through my mind as I stood leaning out of the cottage window, pretending to watch the weather.

Suddenly I perceived that the afternoon sun was shining out brightly, and the sky on every side nearly cloudless again. It was approaching five o'clock, high time for me to think of getting back to the castle. But my own clothes were not half dry yet; so I begged for the loan of the costume I wore, to walk home in. Struck by a sudden thought, I offered to be the bearer of the lace for the English lady. The girl who was to come and call about it to-morrow might then, I suggested, bring my apparel. They seemed to assume that I was longing, for a bit of fun, to present myself to my friends at Adlerberg in peasant's attire, and acquiesced in the arrangement. So I bade farewell to the hospitable folks, took the basket containing the lace, and the little parcel that was to accompany it, and, thus novelly accoutred, went on my way alone.

Plenty of time to collect myself and to meditate as I plodded homewards up the dismal stony road. Not a living soul did I meet till I reached the castle. My disguise was sufficiently complete for the stolid servants in the yard not to recognise me as I passed round to the front door. The porter did not know me till I spoke, and he then fell in readily with the idea that a little jest was intended, and volunteered the information that I should find Mrs. Gerard in her room and alone.

I knocked, and then showed myself at the door.

'What is it?' said Hilda, glancing up carelessly. 'O, the little lace-girl. You may come in,' she added, in German; and I came in accordingly, shutting the door behind me.

Hilda, without troubling herself to cast a second glance at the humble messenger, took the basket from my hands, saying,

'Leave this, and come again to-morrow. You may go now.'

And as I went towards the door she began turning over the lace quickly. Then she put her hand on the parcel, took it out, and was about to read the enclosure, a letter. She showed no sign of surprise, or even agitation, except by her curious, momentary oblivion of the fact of a human presence.

I moved, and looking up she gave a little start at the sight of the peasant-girl she had thought gone.

'O, are you waiting for the money?' she said hastily, and pulling out her purse. 'I take all that there is in this basket. What do I owe you?'

'Hilda!'

And I suddenly pushed back the disfiguring coloured handkerchief, which had served better than a mask.

What a start, this time! She sprang up, changed colour, and instinctively felt for support, nervously clutching the back of the nearest chair. We were both silent. Then Hilda rallied, and looked at me askance, still afraid to speak, because doubting what I knew—how little, how much.

'It is of no use,' said I; 'I have seen Leopold Meredith. I know he is not at Ludwigsheim—perhaps never has been—that his going was a feint to put others off their guard, when an accident had opened their eyes.'

'Upon my word,' I resumed slowly, as she stood mute and confounded, 'it was a bold game to play. Yet it is only by the merest chance that it has *not* suc-

ceeded. The writer of that letter could certainly not have foretold who would be its bearer to you. But to dare everything on such a throw you must be reckless—both.'

Her brow contracted, her lips were compressed. A new thing for her to be thus abashed, she whom I always pictured to myself with another face, rather as I had seen her stand, a bride triumphant, at the altar by Jasper's side. Her position was horrible, pitiable. But there was that in her which might kill pity in the tenderest as fast as it rose—a calculating habit, a hard, self-seeking instinct that never left her, and rushed to the surface even in the supremest hour.

'What do you mean to do?' she asked tentatively.

'I? what do you suppose?'

'Do you mean to tell anything to Sophie?' she said, with difficulty, the words coming as if extorted by pain; 'because if you do, it is all over, and soon Jasper will know.'

Jasper! The sound of his name made me shrink. It exasperated me to hear it on her lips at that moment.

'You can ruin me, of course, if you like,' she continued miserably; 'a word from you, and I am lost.'

'Hear her,' I cried, bewildered. Could this be Hilda? Hilda throwing herself on my mercy, folding her hands, and praying hypocritically, 'I am helpless. Kill me; for I know you hate me. I, your victim, will neither resist nor complain.'

'And Sophie,' she resumed insinuatingly, half encouraged by my silence, 'your friend. *She* has never injured you. Think a little before you use your power to wreck her happiness.'

'Poor Sophie,' I returned bitterly; 'such a reminder comes finely from you, who have made that happiness not worth a day's purchase. A little sooner, a little later, hers must founder. But for you and Leopold Meredith, you may ruin yourselves. I'll have no hand in it, to hasten or delay. I only wish to get away from here—and you—and your hateful secret.' O, if only I could bury the knowledge of it, and leave that behind as well!

'Look here, Maisie,' she began, suddenly changing her manner, and speaking in a tone of earnest, appealing confession; 'you are under a horrible, false impression. How can I help it? I have no means of *proving* the truth to you. I will tell you all—only believe me. The real and only person to blame, from first to last, is Sophie. She is absurdly jealous, and after that unfortunate occurrence ten days ago—the merest chance, and no fault of ours, as you recollect—she treated Leopold to the most frantic scene. Now he detests hysterics and storms—all men do. He told her so, but found it was hopeless to try and make her listen to reason, and was only too thankful to seize an excuse that happened to present itself for getting away the next morning.'

'To Ludwigsheim,' said I ironically.

'Well, he did go there at first.' She paused, and went on with an air of ostentatious frankness, 'Can you not understand how natural it is that old acquaintances, such as he and I, meeting again after two years and so many changes, should have a very great deal to say to each other? We only wish to meet and talk openly, as friends should. But Sophie is so foolish and suspicious, that she won't allow us to do so without making a fool of herself, and tor-

menting poor Leo till he is half mad. Do you know how far she carries her jealous *espionnage* now? Every letter that reaches the castle in the usual way she contrives to examine. So Leo and I are forbidden to look at each other, speak three words, or be alone together for one minute without her playing spy upon us; or else one must prepare for tears, tempers, and a fuss. The prospect was more than Leo's patience could bear, and so —and so—'

'O, go on,' said I, looking at her steadily. Surely even she must despise herself at that moment.

She abandoned that line of self-defence, took up another strain, entreating me not to betray her; solemnly vowed to end the affair for ever, to leave Castle Adlerberg immediately, and never see Meredith again; if only I would give no hint, by manner or otherwise, to Sophie, who would make an *esclandre*, regardless of the scandal, or to Jasper, who would kill her.

Jasper again! Well, I suppose it would have been difficult to leave his name out of the matter altogether, however I might wish to have it so.

'He *must* love you,' I said derisively; 'and this is what has come of it. And you, Hilda, you *would* marry him. Have you repented enough?'

I spoke wildly, out of the abundant bitterness of my heart; but in her guilty dread she thought I was threatening. In vain I assured her again and again that she had nothing to fear from me. Accidental detection had roused in her a full sense of the danger into which she had run, and in her panic she felt she could never be safe again. She exclaimed that she knew I hated her; that she deserved it, for she had been a false friend to me two years ago; and that, suspecting I might stand in her way with Jasper, she had done what she could to detach, nay, to alienate him, though not a spark of genuine feeling could she plead on her side in excuse. I knew her art of delicate misrepresentation and subtle mischief-making, having often witnessed its exercise. She was a skilful poisoner of a mind, when she would. It is incalculable how far light inventions, judicious ridicule, hints, and innuendoes may work on a dawning, half-grown predilection. Honest people are more or less at the mercy of the unscrupulous, and must be so to the world's end. Some things in the past were explained now.

Men, they say, are more commonly selfish than women. The world may be glad the fact is not reversed. For it is rarely, if ever, that a man forms such a cold deliberate creed of selfishness, or follows it out so minutely and remorselessly, as the selfish woman.

Hilda—for once prudence and judgment had deserted her—abased herself without call, without reserve. She did not deny that her affection for Jasper had been and remained a pretence. Her present fear of him seemed genuine enough. She knew she had feigned less well of late, risking the loss of her empire over him, and felt it now, when she needed her power most, to use for throwing dust in his eyes.

Leopold Meredith—well, she would not deny he had a certain hold over her still. She had been weak, foolish, rash, led on to the brink of a precipice, or at least to compromising herself pretty irrevocably by clandestine communications. But she had been saved, and all through me. The accident, my discovery of everything, had made her feel the folly and mad-

ness of her present course, and she had learnt never to expose herself to such misconstructions again. I was her preserver, in fact, if only I would be generous—complete by silence and secrecy this good work I had begun, and thus earn her everlasting gratitude.

If only I could have believed in the sincerity of a single word!

'Don't talk of generosity,' said I plainly; 'my strongest wish is that this shall remain a sealed subject for me. But as for your ruin, your salvation, I know, and so do you, that you hold them, and not I.'

If the demon inside me had once asked for revenge, I was now cloyed and satiated, to the point of loathing, with a kind that only demons can enjoy, that sickened me, and cured me of vindictiveness for ever.

But Hilda can never unsay what she had said, never hide from me any more the desolation of her married life.

That trial-evening was over. It had been hard work to go through with. The moral malaria creeping over our circle seemed to oppress me physically. I thirsted for change, and to escape into a purer, clearer atmosphere.

At night I went to Eva, and after talking a little, I said,

'I am quite ready to leave Castle Adlerberg now; the sooner the better. I have felt the truth of everything you said or implied that morning, three weeks ago. I beg your pardon for refusing to listen then. I only wish I had. But it is not too late. Say we must start the day after tomorrow.'

'Shall we not wait at least till Mr. Meredith returns? It will be more polite.'

'No, no,' said I quickly. Of all things I shrank from the sight of his face. 'Let him come when he pleases, but let us wait for nothing. We have been "going" so long that Sophie will scarcely think it sudden or rude if we leave at the shortest notice. But if you love me, don't ask me any questions. I think there is poison in the air, and it all but caught hold of me. Let us get away now that we can, and in time.'

We could give such a good, commonplace, unanswerable reason for taking our departure—namely, that we were daily being expected by our nearest relations in England—that no one had a word to say. Hilda's brow cleared when she heard of it. She seemed to breathe more freely, convinced at last that I wished her no harm.

Sophie grieved over the parting, which bade fair to be for a long while, but resigned herself to the inevitable; and early on the morning of the very day for which Mr. Meredith had announced his return, Eva and I had left Castle Adlerberg.

That same evening Herr von Zbirow, at his villa on the Main, received what I trusted he might take for what it really was—the last word of our interview a few days ago, and my tardy acquittal, his roll of music returned, with my name, the date, and '*en route* for England' written underneath.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

'Verfehlte Liebe, verfehltes Leben.'
HEINE.

THE scene changes. It does change very often and very abruptly on the modern stage of life. Unities of time and place are unknown in five-act tragedies and comedies there. Another week, and Eva and I are set down

in England, trying to take up the old thread of London existence again as best we may. Conscience twitted me throughout the journey with a sense of defeat, a jeering reminder that here was I flying home from the identical enemies I had left home to escape; influences I would have flung aside for ever, brought back on me now, and into which late incidents had infused a very scorpion's sting.

Sophie, upon our farewell to Adlerberg, had exacted a promise from us that we would write to her from England at least once a week. The correspondence began without delay. Eva wrote diligently and regularly, and, for a time, Sophie's letters were both frequent, gushing, and voluminous.

The Gerards, I learnt from her, left the castle a few days after our own departure, and started on their way back to England. Sophie and her husband, when all their guests were gone, speedily got tired of Adlerberg, and returned to spend the autumn and winter in Ludwigsheim. For about two months afterwards her letters continued to appear punctually week after week, but I was struck by a gradual alteration in their tone. It was odd, constrained, depressed, sometimes bitter. But she was never explicit on the subject of her grievances except by word of mouth. The missives became shorter and shorter, more irregular in their arrival, and at last ceased altogether. Eva mourned and moralised a little over this fresh proof of fickleness in woman. I feared another cause. The most engrossing troubles are incommunicable. Heaven help Sophie Meredith! It was doubtless going hard with her in the battle of life.

Home again! What shall we say of its sweetness? Granting the truism that there is no place resembling it, how far is this an equivocal compliment? Some would reply entirely so, and that the uniqueness of a home is apt to lie in its singular disagreeableness. But the old axiom has a deep root, and, in the face of all, I should maintain that it is something to be thankful for to have, comfortable or uncomfortable, a *pied à terre* in this scrimmage of a world. There is profound wisdom in not quarrelling with one's bread-and-butter, though on the other hand be it remembered that most men, and even women, cannot live on bread-and-butter alone.

I found mine outwardly much as I had left it. The twins, however, had made such strides in general mental culture as were almost alarming. Claude was being 'crammed' for a public school, to which he was mercifully to be sent at last. For the present he was studying with a private tutor, a young man of singular promise, who always held his mouth wide open. With this preceptor Claude kept repeatedly urging Ethel or myself to fall in love, in obedience to the laws of life as revealed in novels and plays. Ethel scouted the notion with ineffable contempt. Her mind, at fourteen, was already made up. She meant to marry for money, she boldly declared, stipulating at the same time that 'money' should also be a gentleman. Poor Mr. Harebell she evidently put down as fulfilling neither of her conditions. Cordially she despised the 'creature,' as she called him, a whippersnapper who forgot to have his hair cut, lisped, wore spectacles, and dabbled in rhyme.

He was very learned on some subjects, I discovered, and modest to excess about his scholarship; withal a bad poet, and vain beyond

all measure of his verse. After an acquaintance of a very few days he presented me with two fantastically bound little volumes containing his compositions. In these the poet, portrayed by himself, appeared as a terrible character, given over to fierce false love, wine, gaming, and all the wildest extravagances of misguided youth. Only my personal conviction of the mild and harmless disposition and thoroughly unexceptionable life of the writer took away from the force of these confessions so far as to make them sound almost comic. Before long he began paying his serious addresses to me. I would not encourage him, but he did not desist; I even think he was secretly grateful to me for my behaviour, for on that very account I became more precious as a source of inspiration to his fertile pen, which was especially eloquent on the theme of unfortunate love.

The Gerards on arriving in England went first to spend some time with Jasper's mother at Brighton, previous to settling down for the winter in a new house they had taken in London.

For Hilda hated the Priory; spoke openly now of her aversion to such a cramped, small, old-fashioned place, odiously situated in a cockney suburb, fit only for tea-gardens, school-treats, and picnic-parties.

The value of the site she knew was enormous, and from the first her favourite scheme had been that Jasper should sell the property, and purchase something more pretentious in a 'desirable' neighbourhood. To part with the Priory he absolutely refused; but he would not insist on burying her there alive, as she pleasantly expressed it, and decided on letting it for a year.

The last eighteen months had seen a new set of fine buildings spring up in our immediate neighbourhood, in the very street where Eva's former studio had stood, and which, with its rambling old houses and irregular roofage, had been demolished to make way for a row of tall, roomy, ornamental dwelling-places, all cut out on one pattern and in the very latest style of architecture.

As fast as they were completed they were eagerly bid for. Nothing could have been more exactly suited to a young couple entering on fashionable London life together. It was one of these residences that Jasper and Hilda had taken, and here before Christmas came they were finally installed.

So the new year opens quietly, and I say to myself, as we do at such turning-points, that I must begin a fresh page, a new life. But look at it how I will, the page is blank; and as for my new life, it is much more like an end than a beginning.

Eva had fallen back upon her art vocation, her all in all, and devoted herself to it more assiduously than ever. Mr. Severn had had a serious attack of illness since our return, and his broken health forbade her leaving him as formerly. So she had set up a studio in her home at Westburn, where she worked away patiently, from week's end to week's end, among her old pets, animal and vegetable.

She had her reward. As a *genre* painter her name was making way. Her pictures were rapidly becoming the rage, and sold as quickly as she could paint them. Her future, as an accomplished and popular artist in her special style, seemed bright and secure.

I envied her. 'Why not imitate me?' she asked laughingly, when I said so. Too late, said I.

To engage in a pursuit with any zest, one must have, or imagine oneself to have, some dim prospect of taking a foremost place some day; but to do this, special gifts or early training are necessary, and I had neither. Moreover that healthy appetite for petty distinctions, which keeps work a-going, and which all have, to begin with, was spoiled in me already. No craving to see lucubrations of mine in print at the bookstalls, my feminine daubs on the walls of an exhibition, ever fired and stimulated me now.

On the other hand, looking coolly into my present, colourless, purposeless subsistence, I must own that a cobbler's life was glorious by comparison.

My mother made no secret of her feeling that this provisional routine had lasted long enough, and that now it was high time it should reach its expected and natural goal—marriage. She was growing impatient for mine—to whom, was of minor consequence in her eyes; but this fond hope of hers had been, she thought, too often deferred. One day she began to sound me very delicately on the subject of Claude's tutor, and the possibility of my returning his affection in my secret heart. She hinted at her fears lest I might have been constraining myself to turn a deaf ear to him and his sonnets, out of filial scruples and a natural presumption that she would not approve of so pound-foolish a match; and intimated next that, so far from setting her face against my inclination, if I thought I could accept Mr. Harebell, she would make every pecuniary sacrifice in her power to settle me fairly in life with the author of *Confessions in Song*.

Phœbus! how I laughed! This manner of treating the proposal puzzled her hopelessly. She confessed that for her part she thought Claude's Mentor a very attractive young fellow, and a most mellifluous writer. To be sure some of his poems might strike you as rather strong, almost shocking, if you did not know the man. But this startling fervour itself might, she fancied, have told in favour of his suit with me. What could have sealed up my heart thus against the utterances of Love's votary, who wrote so fluently, too, about his master? She was at a loss to guess the obstacle. Jasper Gerard? Never. She half suspected the part he had played in my past. But now that he was married and done for, married withal to my earliest friend, I could not, surely, be so silly, so preposterous, so unprincipled, as not to forget.

I tried to console, to reassure her. But, ah me, it is lost labour to speak of the intricacies of life to those who have never seen or felt more than its rough outlines, and to whom, therefore, it seems so simple and manageable. They are enviable souls. A microscopic mind's-eye is the worst of drawbacks to happiness here below.

She was soon satisfied that at least I was not pining away. Nobody, in fact, could have been less like Patience on a monument. I seemed to have developed a taste for general society, and for popularity, which thoroughly pleased, but also astonished, her, as something new. I was always ready to go out with her everywhere, to sing my best at parties and amateur concerts; I dressed with care, not to say with coquetry, and appeared to have given up those Bohemian predilections and fashions that used once so sadly to distress her. As the London season approached she ceased to regret that Mr. Harebell had failed to touch me by his

roundelays. The right man, and in rather more brilliant circumstances, could hardly fail to turn up shortly, at one or another of the booths in Vanity Fair.

So far was she from knowing or understanding that any possible marriage must make me actively miserable. Even Eva, with whom I now regularly spent every Saturday and Sunday at Westburn, must needs attack me one day with the common wish on my behalf. Should I not marry?

I put my fingers to my ears.

'Let my mother talk of that, who knows next to nothing about me. But you, Eva, you must be mad to ask such a thing. You know I think it was wicked of Hilda to marry Jasper Gerard. Now if to-morrow I were to accept Mr. Harebell or any one else, I should be no bit better than she.'

Eva sighed, saying reproachfully,

'Yes, because you still let your mind harp on the old subject—'

'No, no, a thousand times no!' I caught her up vehemently, adding emphatically, 'I give you—let this be the last time we name the subject between us—my solemn word, that, for all of that old love that stirs in me now, I could believe it had never been.'

'Then why do you shrink so from the very idea of being made love to?' she asked innocently.

'Because it changed me before it left me. It has just killed in me the possibility of loving any one else; more than that, taught me to loathe an idea I might otherwise have tolerated—the idea of marrying on amiable regard.'

'What do you mean to do, then, all your life long?' resumed my practical friend—'remain an old maid, like me?'

'Perhaps. You are far happier than Hilda, than Sophie.'

'It is pleasant enough to be an old maid, if you can be something else besides. But you have no regular occupation, Maisie, and say yourself that you will never begin now. You have not cultivated any of your talents in particular, except your voice, and voices go just when an artist's hand or an author's head would be at its strongest.'

'O, hush!' I exclaimed. 'What I am living for now I don't like to ask myself, much less to tell you.'

'Shall I tell you?' she said gravely. 'You are waiting and watching to see Jasper Gerard's happiness go to ruin.'

I bent my head in sullen assent.

'But mind,' said I, looking up unflinchingly, '*I* will not touch it. I have had a lesson—a glimpse of things so hateful that I am sworn to let that alone for ever. But, though I shall stand apart, I shall see it fall.'

'And then?' she asked.

'Then I will die, or go into a convent, or marry Mr. Harebell or any one you may choose for me,' said I.

'Maisie,' she said hopelessly, 'you are incurable. Why must you talk in this wild and random way?'

'Because,' I replied, in earnest, 'every day I feel more and more that I have nothing particular to gain or to lose in life now. Offer your husks to those who have never seen flowers. I shall not die, however; but live, and let live. The best hope for me is to forget at last that I ever had a soul, or what it was like.'

From that day forward Eva never talked to me again on the subject of matrimony.

She had spoken the truth. It

was from no fresh hankering after gaiety that I went into society incessantly and more willingly than ever before, but simply because an attraction stronger than prudence, stronger than pleasure, drew me to every party, every kind of gathering where I was likely to meet the Gerards.

Not to sham friendliness with Hilda. That, with the recollection of what had passed between us at Adlerberg still vivid in my mind, was impossible. I avoided visiting her at her house as far as I could, and, even in society, instinctively held aloof from all but the merest formal intercourse with her or with Jasper.

But we had numbers of visiting acquaintances in common, and seemed to be always meeting. I could study the two then as much as I wished; read changes to which no others present had the key.

Hilda watched me uneasily at first; made studied efforts to be friendly, as people do with those whom accidental circumstances have forced into their trust. But she was soon convinced of my unaffected neutrality, and that I had no ambition to be her enemy or her confidante. I knew enough. Her face, when caught unawares, often wore the dark absent look of one who has entangled herself past easy extrication. Wanting in the will, she could not find the way. But in public she was all smiles and repartees, bright, gay, talkative as ever.

Jasper, however, is no Janus. He leaves it to his wife to have two faces. He has but one, over which the shade I saw growing when first we met again at Adlerberg has deepened and become fixed. I do not speak of a cloud of jealousy or mistrust—Hilda for the present is laudably impartial in her flirtations—but an expression telling of that barren inner struggle, that civil war of a mind divided against itself that wears out the soul.

It could not have gone otherwise. Sooner or later he was bound to realise that he had wilfully linked his life with that of a woman whose ingrained idiosyncrasies bid everlasting strife to his own. In the moral struggle for existence that follows, she has the advantage, caring only for herself. For him such a future is chaos. I see this, and am never tired of seeing it. Is it wicked?

What should it signify to me that he and his wife live in the next street or miles away? What are the lights in that house, the visitors at their door, the hours they keep, to me?

Something still, it appeared. I studied their outward life—got to know it well. It was easily learnt by heart. For Hilda a certain 'fast' and fashionable routine in its meretricious artificial brilliancy and prestige was Alpha and Omega. I knew, from recollections of old, that Jasper had no taste for it; moreover that never before had he suffered himself to be drawn into it.

Assuredly that is not the life he pictured to himself he would lead with his beautiful bride, such an existence as once he had sketched to me as his ideal. Delicate generosity would have been the moving force; the ruling ambition, so to handle wealth as to draw in those who most need and can least take thought for its enjoyments, to share them with him, thus spreading the genial, softening, refining influences of taste, culture, and liberality by invisible threads in a thousand directions—a mission which few have the least idea how to fulfil, and to which he seemed to the manner born.

But look at the pitiable exchange. Opposed and checkmated by his own queen, all so gradually, so plausibly, that no man could have stood out against it without putting himself in the wrong. All Hilda's connections belonged to the world of fashion and convention, and, as it turned out, she neither could nor would have friends and ties elsewhere. How should he withdraw her from the medium she loved? how debar her from making it her sphere, and trying to shine there as others did?

Socially speaking, it was his own world as much as hers. Pity he was no longer free to use, or not to use, it after his own fancy. The young man of the upper classes, who has a natural dislike or impatience of the slavery of an artificial set, may lead his own bright particular life apart, without thereby losing caste in the least; but only so long as he remains unmarried. Bachelors and spinsters have a charter to be original, eccentric in their habits, to choose their own companions and amusements, and be practically nonconformists, without risking expulsion from the fold. The world smiles and has patience. But when once an establishment is started, the case is altered. Then the new couple must hoist the orthodox colours of the set to which they belong, or take the consequences. According to their zeal in doing what is 'required' of people in their position, and making a proper display, will they be reckoned, honoured, and sought after, or sunk into obscurity and neglect. Such a world's favour to Jasper might seem a thing he could very well dispense with, but Hilda cared for little else.

That spring season was unusually gay. The fancy had taken me to see something of the whirl into which I had never thrown myself before, and the opportunity was good. I wished to take the measure of its immeasurable emptiness, join in the pursuit of its threadbare charms and prizes, analyse them, and know their net worth.

It was the study, not of a class, but of a set. The more we live, the more surely we learn that virtue is pretty equally distributed over all castes of society. But there are circles in all castes, from the lowest to the highest, which are corrupt, root and branch; and it was in one of these demoralising cliques that Hilda lived, moved, and had her being.

My mother only saw the outside, which was rather aristocratic, and amused and pleased her. But once penetrate beyond, and there was no blinking the picture. As for the bluntness of moral perception, the hugged prejudices, the studied disregard of truth and straightforwardness there prevailing, it must frankly be said that the tone was calculated to disgust the most favourably-disposed neophyte not yet hardened to the game.

Only now and then, what with gaslight, glitter, lovely women's faces, Parisian dresses, dance-music, diamonds, and ever-varying and increasing display, the excitement, half feigned to begin with, became more and more genuine, till, paradoxical though it may sound, sheer excess of humbug ended by generating a real *bonâ-fide* intoxication. It was this delirium Hilda was always seeking. Its power is by no means despicable. It might gain Jasper at last, and drown in him the regret for a better part renounced.

Hilda's flirtations he despised, but was too keen to attach more importance to them than they

were worth. She did not care to disguise that she liked and would court compliments, flattery, and admiring attentions from men, public deference and private envy from women, just as she liked and would have muffins and toast for breakfast. But for not one of the foolish fellows she encouraged to dangle in her train had she a spark of feeling stronger than indifference. Even I could see that. If she did not love her husband, neither did she care a jot for those miscellaneous specimens of youth, gilt or ungilt, that adorned her coterie. To be sure her ways made people talk; but what of that? No harm was meant. Other wives in her set did the same, and worse. Her individuality was coming out in its true colours at last. Very soon Jasper will have no more to learn.

The rooting up of an attachment is, to certain tenacious natures, the most painful sensation inflictable. The sight of the gradual crushing out of life in a love was before me now. In time, when Jasper has passed from the last stage of contempt to that of indifference, he will cease to feel; but he could not reach that by one leap. Already his judgment, his head, condemned Hilda fatally; but in all hearts worth the having love dies hard.

(To be continued.)

SOUVENIR DE VILLE D'AVRAY.

LANDSCAPE MEMORIES.

No. IV. SOUVENIR DE VILLE D'AVRAY.

Not in the spring-time, when the woods are twining
Wreaths for young love;
Not in the summer, when the sun is shining
As king above:
But in the mellow autumn is the grove
Most sweet wherein to rove.

Spring is so innocent, she hath no knowing
Of loss or gain;
Summer so glad with pleasure of bestowing
What man will deign
To take, and never own that he was fain!
They take no thought for pain.

Yet on this earth there ever lacks completeness
In present joy,
If, half suspected, mix not with the sweetness
Some sharp alloy,
That may forbid our spirit's food to cloy,
Yet not its taste destroy.

O russet woods, beneath whose sombre shading
Lost sunbeams play,
Is then that wealth of gold your lorn boughs lading
All thrown away?
When crown'd in pomp by hand of dying day
Have ye then naught to say?

Is not the whisper of your branches, waving
O'er golden fern,
An echo of the heart's half-reck'd-of craving
To know and learn
How fare all things that never more return
From earth, or wave, or urn?

Is not your glory greater than in summer?
Ay, brighter far!
The end is nigh, and he, the certain comer,
Who lifts the bar
That shuts the prison-door where weepers are,
Is near; and none may mar

Or beauty, or the quiet of long sleeping,
But ye will rest
In expectation; and what hint of weeping
With those, thrice blest,
Clasp'd to the strong earth-mother's tender breast,
Where no man may molest!

B. MONTGOMERIE RANKING.

HOPS AND HOPPING.

The Father of History informs us that the Pœonians made a brew, or *bruton*, of barley, and that the ancient Egyptians—the originators of luxury and refinement—did not disdain to drink beer. They enjoyed themselves in their day; and if the representations on their monuments do them no injustice, they were not always more sober than their successors in civilisation. In Roman times the Emperor Julian, although he adored his dear Lutetia (Paris), and loved the Gauls, long beards and rough manners included, never could endure their tipple, and wrote a facetious epigram, in which he said that 'barley wine' was no true wine at all. But we Christians, differing from the Apostate's taste as well as religion, while we give the god of grapes his due, do not place him on so lofty a pedestal. 'Give knaves their wine,' cried Burns, in an outburst of contemptuous liberality. 'A man's a man for a' that;' but we fear that when he had the pint stoup in hand he could not always make the assertion very distinctly. Still, in the interests of sobriety we recommend the homely brew as less injurious than anything stronger. Until the reign of Brummel it was the general drink of the upper classes; and let those who think it beneath their dignity remember that even that exquisite, who could not mention the word 'beer' without a shudder, was more than once detected 'malting it' when he thought himself well out of view.

The virtues of bottled beer were discovered by good Alexander Nowell, Dean of St. Paul's. In the reign of Queen Mary he was Master of Westminster School, and one day, when he was amusing himself with his rod (not his birch-but his fishing-rod), he received intelligence that Bonner had designs against him. Being by no means desirous of becoming a light in the literal sense of the word, he determined upon immediate flight; and having little time, and probably less appetite, he left his basket of prog, which he had provided for the day, under the bank, in a place where he had concealed it. Fortune favoured the future dean, who found a London merchant willing and ready to convey him across the seas. Returning in happier days, upon the accession of Elizabeth, he thought of revisiting the scene of his alarm, and there he discovered his basket, where he had left it, and in it his bottle of beer, or rather, as Fuller tells us, 'no bottle, but a gun, such was the sound at the opening thereof.'

Hops are first mentioned by Pliny; the young shoots being eaten as a vegetable, like our asparagus. But until the sixteenth century they were not used as an ingredient in our beer; and when their cultivation was first introduced from Flanders, in 1525, an outcry was raised, and Parliament was petitioned against 'a wicked weed that would spoil the taste of the drink, and endanger the people.'

But the piquant bitter found favour with the public, who relished this addition to the previously unmitigated sweetness. And so the hop was promoted from the

hedge-row to the 'garden,' and ever since labour and money have been constantly expended upon it. Kent and Sussex testify the change; and when we look at the broad extent of the plantations we must not forget the cost at which they are maintained. It is estimated at from forty to one hundred and fifty pounds per acre; and the sum is not surprising, for hops are most exhausting to the soil. The growers are obliged to expend all their farm manure upon them, and often have recourse to rags, stale fish, and other delicacies to tempt the appetite of the dainty weed. Great is the labour of digging round the 'hills,' cutting off suckers, tying up bines, and setting poles. But at length, to repay all this care, the plant rises joyously, and climbs aloft, and puts forth viny leaves and flowering tresses. Graceful truly it is, whether we see it hanging in festoons over the cottage porches or overhanging the long avenues of the hop-gardens. No fruit-bearing tree can vie with it in beauty, except, perhaps, the blithesome vine, as it springs from tree to tree in the sunny plains of Italy. The hop grows from ten to fourteen feet high, and is now often trained across from one pole to another, while the whole garden is surrounded with an ornamental trellis-work and with a belt of interlacing plants. In some places apple-trees grow amcng them, and the ruddy fruit gleams out among the yellow-flowering bines. In others the large white convolvulus (*sepium*), which is luxuriant in Kent, has outstripped the hop in climbing the pole, and throws out its beautiful white blossoms at the summit as a token of victory in the race.

Many fortunes are made and lost in hop-growing. It is a most speculative business, requiring a large outlay, and depending on the changes of the weather. Wind and frost are most destructive to the gardens, and warm nights are especially desirable, as the plants grow mostly in their sleep. But there are more dangers than those arising from the variations of the climate, and there are other animals besides men who pay their court to the fair lady of the garden. Not only are her diseases manifold, but her flowers and leaves are so beset and assailed that they furnish an interesting study to the entomologist. Almost every month brings its proportion of destructiveness. The first insect that appears is the well-known wine-worm. Next, in March, comes the flea, similar to the turnip-fly or beetle, but larger. Then in May we have the aphides, or long-winged flies, which increase in a most alarming and, we may say, unnatural manner; for the flies have no sooner deposited their young—or lice, as they are called—than these lice produce more lice within a few hours of their birth. The lady-bird—known in Kent by the homely name of field-bug—follows these prolific animals, and commits great havoc among them. She lays her eggs under the leaves, and thence arise the 'black niggers' or serpents. Finally, there is the frog-fly, the *pupæ* of which are seen jumping about the 'hills' in great numbers, like shrimps on the sea-shore. They are very beautiful (as many destructive creatures are), being striped with every variety of colour.

The robin of September, twittering on the spray, heralds a merry bustling time, during which the hop-picking—or 'hopping,' as it is called—is to be performed. As the flowers of the 'gardens' begin to get brown, strange-looking people, in very heterogeneous

costumes, make their appearance about all the villages and roads. By degrees the country begins to present the appearance of a gipsy encampment. Fires are seen everywhere blazing by hedge and highway. Here we find round-headed huts, formed of branches of trees, covered with a motley heap of old clothes of all sizes and colours; there is drawn up a gaily-painted 'cart,' which provides its more luxurious occupants with small but clean and comfortable beds; farther on rises a group of white tents of very pleasing and inviting aspect, but not always proof against the inclemency of the weather. But the great mass of the pickers are accommodated in 'hopper-houses,' belonging to the farmers in the neighbourhood, the furniture of which consists only of some clean straw to lie on. The best of these establishments are built in low squares, and have separate rooms for each family; but in the worst there are no such divisions, and the people are herded together as promiscuously as cattle. But however rough this may be, it is a pleasant change to many of them from their stifling alleys in London. Although so many have arrived, the cry is still 'They come!' and they are of all classes, from the most wretched miserable beggar to the reduced tradesman. Some of the schools are closed, that the children may be available. Many hail from the Minories and other parts of London, from Berkshire, Sussex, Surrey, and even longer distances. Some, who form the rank and file, walk all the way, followed by strings of barefooted children, and sleep under hedges or, by good fortune, in stables; those who can afford it carrying shoes in their hands, which they put on when approaching a town. Others come down in the cheap trains, which are run principally on Sunday for their especial benefit; while some will not take advantage of this provision, but proudly proclaim that they will not travel in a common train, and don't wish to be 'pushed and scrouged by all the rough people.' The more aristocratic pickers keep the above-mentioned carts or wagons solely for the purpose of travelling and living in them at this season of the year.

The actual work of hop-picking is performed mostly by women and children; but a certain number of men are always employed, who go about with hooks and levers, and take up the poles, cut down the plants, and lay them on the 'bins.' These receptacles consist of wooden frames containing large canvas bags, holding about twenty bushels each, and are set down in long rows in the gardens beside the bines of hops. As you look from one end to the other of these, the scene is very striking. You might imagine you were looking down some kind of bazaar. Shawls and rugs are hanging up all along to keep off the sun, and two rows of people, of every age from five to seventy, and dressed in every variety of costume—some of the women very picturesque in broad-brimmed hats and brightly coloured jackets—are bending over the sides of the bins, their fingers flying as quickly as if their lives depended upon speed. Some little toddles are sitting on the ground, or picking hops into their perambulators; but they are soon tired, although a few of them will pick a couple of bushels in a day. But those who are a little older outstrip their parents with their nimble fingers, and a 'good child' who knows the art of picking will earn more than a grown person. The farmers will not allow any leaves to be left with the flowers, and

when the hops are small the labour is much greater, and more money is expected; but the usual 'tally' is between seven and eight bushels for a shilling. There are constant disputes between the workers and employers on this subject; one party threatening to strike, the other telling them to do so, and that they can find plenty of fresh hands. Many families earn about 10*l.* during the season, and count upon this money to provide themselves with clothes for the year.

These nomad immigrants are looked upon with considerable disfavour by the neighbouring farmers and villagers, who regard them as 'rough' customers, 'gipsies, Irish, and Londoners.' I could add Indians to the list. They have something also to justify their ill opinion in the mysterious disappearance of a considerable portion of the apples and potatoes in their neighbourhood. In the hop-gardens themselves there is a great deal of badinage going forward, but generally of a good-humoured kind; and if a lady or gentleman enters, the hop-pickers are ready to wipe his or her boots with a hop-bine—an old custom, to be duly followed by a donation. They are not indifferent to this latter part of the ceremony, and their constant readiness to ask money for the 'poor hoppers' at one time greatly annoyed a friend of mine, who lived near one of the gardens, and whose favourite motto was, 'If you take a farthing from a thousand pounds, it is a thousand pounds no longer.' Often had the swarthy hop-dames solicited his bounty, but in vain. At last one evening they entirely surrounded him, and while some stopped his progress and insisted that he should 'pay his footing,' a few of the more active ran a bin up behind him with such force that it fairly carried him off his legs, and he fell back into twenty bushels of hops. There, amid laughing and chaffing, they held him down, struggling and half-smothered, until his sentence was duly pronounced. It was that he should either pay twenty good shillings on the spot, or receive as many kisses from the ugliest old woman among them. For a time he still hesitated, mindful of his maxim; but at last, on the near approach of the executioner, he gave way and paid the money.

There is a difference in the habitation of the pickers in this respect, that some live close to their work, and others at a little distance from it. At Golden Green, near Hadlow, for instance, there is a large establishment close to a bend in the Medway, and those who take up their abode in it are known as the 'Lake Hoppers,' and perform the work round the vicinity. A short time since a cart containing thirty-two of them was passing over the bridge by this 'lake,' when the bank gave way; the whole of them were precipitated into the water, and all, with one exception, were drowned.

When the pickers are hard at work, carts are constantly employed in carrying the hops into the outhouses, where the drying process is going forward. They are spread six inches thick upon hair-cloths, generally about twenty feet wide, and large fires of Welsh coal and charcoal are lighted under them. A quantity of brimstone is also burnt, to give the hops a yellow colour, although it does not improve them otherwise. The scent arising from this operation can be perceived all round the neighbourhood; it is very powerful and aromatic, and the men who finally tread the hops into the 'pockets,' or sacks, are so much overcome by it that they have to be constantly changed.

Very pretty is the train of hop-pickers returning home in the golden rays of sunset. It sometimes appears to be interminable, and is composed almost entirely of women and children. Some have bound honeysuckles round their heads, others flowering hop-bines, which hang down upon their shoulders in graceful clusters, and many carry long poles in their hands as trophies of their work. There are the old and gray, the young and frolicsome. Great is the laughing and chaffing among the latter; and we are reminded of the saucy habits of the grape-gatherers of ancient Greece, whose raillery became the foundation of comedy. Some are playing and dancing, others singing, some threatening rude reprisals, such as 'smacking' one another's faces. Their costumes are sufficiently heterogeneous and negligent to be picturesque. Many have large straw hats, and show that they have more taste for bright colours than for whole garments. Bottles and babies are general accompaniments to the older and graver part of the procession, and cloaks or shawls to protect from rain or sun. Baskets are also common, and here and there a tin pot or kettle shows that they have been reviving

> 'The days when we went gipsying,
> A long time ago.'

The evenings—especially those on which the strangers are to return—are devoted to less innocent and unobjectionable revelry. Bacchus spreads his influence round those who have been doing his work, and no age or sex can entirely escape his sway. The pickers who return to their homes by cheap trains are generally carried in long carts to the railway station, and frequently sing in chorus all the way, sometimes with more taste than might be expected. When they are deposited—often to wait a long time for the train—they are soon again at their wild amusements. Fights occasionally occur, both among men and women. Some of the buxom lasses, not content with strong words, resort to more unkind arguments. These are generally bestowed upon their husbands, but sometimes on other fair neighbours; and you may hear one, who has been worsted in the fray, calling out in a deprecatory voice, 'Fair play, fair play; strike a woman of your own age.' Many of the women are as bad as the men, but in general you find the wife beseeching and belabouring her husband, who is lying on the ground perfectly helpless, and can only reward her exertions with a benign smile.

And now the train comes up, and takes in its human load, and the hop-pickers return to their wretched homes in the courts and alleys of London, replenished in pocket and invigorated in health, but deprived of the pure air which has been so beneficial to them in their annual 'hopping' outing.

RIVER RHYMES.

No. III. A TINY TRIP.

I.

THE BILL OF LADING.

SHE was cargo and crew,
    She was boatswain and skipper,
She was passenger too,
Of the 'Nutshell' canoe;
And the eyes were so blue
    Of this sweet tiny tripper!
She was cargo and crew,
    She was boatswain and skipper!

II.

THE PILOT.

How I bawled, 'Ship, ahoy!'
    Hard by Medmenham Ferry!
And she answered with joy,
She would like a convoy,
And would love to employ
    A bold pilot so merry:
How I bawled, 'Ship, ahoy!'
    Hard by Medmenham Ferry!

III.

THE VOYAGE.

'Neath the trees gold and red,
    In that bright autumn weather,
When our white sails were spread,
O'er the waters we sped
Down to sweet Maidenhead:
    How we drifted together!
'Neath the trees gold and red,
    In that bright autumn weather!

IV.

THE HAVEN.

O, 'tis pleasant to dine
    In October at Skindle's!
And to muse o'er the wine—
With a small hand in mine—
I protest is divine,
    And the daylight soon dwindles!
O, 'tis pleasant to dine
    In October at Skindle's!

J. ASHBY-STERRY.

AULD LANG SYNE IN THE CHILTERN HUNDREDS.

MEN'S lives do not always run on in a plainly defined course, like the great North road between London and York, fair and straight, and wide enough to admit of other vehicles besides their own having elbow-room and space to display their proportions and paces. There must be ups and downs; but then these are only natural in a world where birth and marriage, death and decay, make up the inevitable order of things. Existence would not be worth having without them, and the wholesome, holy, helpful joys and sorrows that they bring. It is given to some of us to go on our pilgrimage in quiet fashion, treading the beaten track, feeling that nothing out of the common lot of humanity has happened to us, and sleeping our last sleep in a green old age, full of years and honour.

But with others it is not so. We have our life-trees uprooted, see our best work cut short, our dearest hopes extinguished, our best-beloved, with all accumulated gifts and graces, lost and wasted, and our brightest stars quenched in utter darkness. We are the people who know what life is: *Messieurs les autres* have only a little quiet consciousness of vegetation—seed-time, harvest, and rest. Still, in stirring, tumultuous, and stormy times it does us good to look back and realise those which were not so fierce and fiery, when peace brooded over village homesteads, and there was no competition, no race for wealth, and consequently less impatience, less temptation, and less blight. Even the remembrance of such a golden age, of quiet days and peaceful nights, of what we somewhat disdainfully call the jog-trot of rural existence, may calm for a few moments our fevered spirits, and enable us to live, during a brief interregnum from our griefs and cares, in the Elysium that expected to-day to be as yesterday, and to-morrow as the time before the Flood.

Previous to shooting Niagara and facing what has to come after, let us mentally spend a little space in a rotten borough, a nook among the Chiltern Hills, far enough from the busy hum of men to stagnate and keep green, yet so near to the modern Babylon that a two hours' journey might bring the monarchs of Mincing-lane into such complete isolation and quietness that the sound of a whole horse going down the rustic street would be the sole outdoor event of an evening. There are men and women not a few, in the stunning tide of the million-peopled city, whose eyes will fill and their hearts swell with memory's waves as they read these scant gleanings of a dying day, a departing generation, and lands that have long changed owners. The new masters make good and beneficent use of them, and the old ones would not regret the alterations, if they could rise with purged vision from their graves, and have a glimpse of the differences Time has wrought. An old inhabitant may, however, be not only pardoned, but, perchance, accompanied, as he retraces the quiet lanes to the gray church and rambling parsonage where Frank Harcourt was once vicar, and Simeon Snaithe and Robert Dixon

his curates. Let us recall the situation. Seven miles across the hills from the nearest railway station, nestled under the beech-woods and looking right across the fertile vale of Aylesbury, Lease-over thirty years ago was perfectly innocent of gas, though not ignorant of Mr. Disraeli, and rejoiced in the mementoes of its past, while utterly regardless of its nonentity in the future. The tilted carrier's cart and daily coach to and from London, the cage for befooled bipeds and pound for wandering quadrupeds, were still in full force, though they have now all vanished before the march of progress. Stanch Conservatives were all the men, and the women ditto—as best befitted the weaker vessels, who would have been thought to be in a very bad way indeed if they had dared to think for themselves instead of adopting the opinions of their lords and masters.

At the Great House, inhabited by a brave old Indian general, were relics and ruins of an ancient monastery, and about a mile off, down a shady bridle-path, was what remained of a convent, Paradise by name. Three sides of a quadrangle were left, and adapted for a girls' school, kept by four of the stateliest and godliest of gentlewomen that ever wore their days away in helping the young idea to shoot in the right direction. There were some curious old arched doorways; the refectory had become the schoolroom, and the abbess's parlour a class- or music-room. The mill attached to the premises was let off; but the terraced garden behind, with its pleached alleys, clipped hedges, and murmurous bees, sloped to the running stream, and is remembered as a dream of quaint and antiquated beauty by all owners of hearts and souls who ever wandered about, and learned perforce to love it. What untold pleasure it was to watch the trout leaping and plashing in the water, to be allowed to go down as far as the little island in mid-stream, where the swans built, or to help gather the lavender and sweet herbs for winter use!

There was a tradition that, in some part of an old building which was pulled down to make room for an infant-school about forty years before, Roger Bacon had really compounded the first gunpowder, and the earliest use he made of it was to frighten a gang of robbers who lived in the neighbouring woods; but whether there was any truth in the tale no one was learned enough to declare.

Work and wages, school, church and parson, had rolled on at a slow contented rate for many years, when the vicar—Mr. Staypole—was found dead in his bed one Monday morning, from the combined effects of the recent county election, and the exertion of the previous Sunday services. He was an old bachelor, whose comforts in life had been his pipe and his politics, and the thorn in his side a little Baptist chapel, which had sprung up under the very windows of his parsonage, and the anathemas which were declaimed from its pulpit. The living was in the influence, though not exactly in the gift, of a rich and pious banking firm, who, ignorant of the coming strife among the creeds, sent the scion intended for the Church to school at Rugby, and thence to Trinity, that largest minded of all Cambridge houses. He had grown up over six feet high, and proportionately broad, with a healthy love of life, and a considerable share of muscular Christianity. He was, moreover, a gentleman of the highest breeding—a much more requisite qualification for his calling than is

generally imagined. When first inducted to Leaseover he found his church a mouldy well, the vicarage little better than a barn, the chapel a hotbed of discord, the parish a pigsty of drunkenness, and the outlying hamlets strongholds of barbarism. He immediately put two stoves and a chamber-organ in the church, repaired the churchyard-wall, and converted its paths from miry sloughs to passable and pleasant ways; and having been so lavish as to order more gravel than he wanted, sent the surplus to the Baptist chapel, with directions to his men to make those paths dry and sound before the next Sunday. It is needless to say that Frank Harcourt thenceforth met with no opposition from that quarter; the congregation of the Bethel grew less and less, while that in the church increased and multiplied from week to week, till there was next to no dissent to contend with. The church, having in former days been part of the monastic establishment, was at some little distance from the town, and the nearest way to it was through a succession of fields, with gates between, which went by the name of the Herring Path. It was a short cut to a good many houses and farms, and the poor folks who frequented it observed before long that the new parson, instead of banging the gates behind him, or rushing headlong through, as if they were made solely for his own comfort and convenience, was actually in the habit of holding them open for any woman or child who might be a few paces behind him, as courteously as if she were the first lady in the land. He did this once or twice for Betty Leatherton, the gipsy centenarian of the district, and exchanged a few pleasant words with her, and she immediately spread his fame as a 'raal gen'elman' far and wide in her peregrinations among the villages.

After adding a few habitable rooms to the vicarage, our hero married a wife whose kith and kin were among our country's noblest, and who made herself as much at home in the poorest hovel in the parish as she ever had been in her father's house. We do not mean that she indulged in the liberties which so many visitors of the poor allow themselves—such as opening the door without knocking, peering into their domestic arrangements, and intruding on them, in season and out of season, under the excuse of love for their souls; but that she treated them with the same respect and kindness as if they had been her equals, with whom she exchanged a friendly call. No class of people appreciate such true politeness more than the poor, though it is but seldom they receive it. Hand in hand the Harcourts lived and worked; and though after a time the annual increase of the family kept the mother pretty much at home, she was always accessible, with a willing ear, a sympathising word, and gentle womanly counsel for all who sought her help. Now the Reverend Frank was a man of boundless energy, and could not be content without trying to civilise the hamlets which lay among the hills, as soon as he had got things into working order in the town below; and to this end he engaged two curates, one of them being Robert Dixon, who was intended to live at Lee, and the other Simeon Snaithe, whose sphere of action was to be Scrubwood.

Simeon had previously been a Scripture-reader, that is to say, a connecting link between the lower laity and the Establishment, and he was principally remarkable for being the victim of a peculiar family nomenclature. Our readers must

remember that there are far more odd events and characters in real life than ever find their way into the flowery fields of fiction; and this little record is, save for some slight disguise, absolute matter of fact; though, as the actors in it are all gone in peace to the 'land o' the leal,' it is perfectly allowable to reproduce them, especially as both place and circumstances were in so primitive a corner that they appear well-nigh improbable to those of us who are in the full whirl of society and the excitements of modern life. The parents of our curate were well-to-do, though not rich, London tradespeople; and being young and full of hope and splendid possibilities, they emulated the example of the patriarch Jacob, so far at least as their part went towards increasing the number of her Britannic Majesty's subjects. When the first son was born they named him Reuben, then came Simeon, Levi, Judah, Asshur, Issachar, and Dan. They advanced no farther, to their great disappointment. But in process of time there arrived a little girl, who, for consistency's sake, was called Dinah, and there the race of wished-for patriarchs came to a stand-still. Simeon was the only one who took to his Bible kindly; and as he did not see that nineteenth-century trade was conducted on anything like Christian principles, he became a street-preacher, and ultimately a Scripture-reader, from which position it was a much easier step to holy orders thirty years ago than it is now. Curates had not then struck for better pay, and 60*l.* per annum with a 'title' was considered good. At all events he was the very man to make that sum of money keep him in ease and comfort, and to have something to spare into the bargain. Strange as it may seem, he had cherished in his City life a passion for botany, and in his rare intervals of leisure had scoured all the country within walking distance of London for specimens. He looked forward to his rural curacy with great delight, as affording him boundless opportunities of pursuing his favourite study, and took with him, as companions of his solitude, a tame Demerara rat and an Australian crow, which performed marvels of whistling. The only house in the hamlet of Scrubwood at which Mr. Snaithe could possibly be accommodated was a primitive sort of hostel, kept by fairly respectable and thriving people, and yclept the Leather Bottle; and when the good vicar took two closets (rooms they could hardly be called) for him, one of which had been the landlady's lace-room till her eyes grew too dim to work at her pillow any longer, he felt that he was killing several birds with one stone: putting a wholesome sort of restraint on an out-of-the-way public-house, and securing the maximum of comfort for his curate combined with the minimum of expense.

Robert Dixon was of quite another stamp: he never alluded to any circumstances of his earlier life prior to entering as a sizar at St. John's, and designated himself 'an earnest student.' He was one to whom a book was a book, and beloved in a certain way, provided it either coincided with his own private opinions or was approved of by the magnates of the party in the Church with whom he had cast in his lot; and he brought down to his new curacy so many old tea-chests filled with volumes that Mr. Harcourt had great difficulty in getting them transported to the farmhouse at Lee which was to be his abode. He also began to have serious doubts as to whether an individual who owned so much literature was

likely to be the right man in the right place, or whether he would not prefer the study of Horace and Virgil, or that of the Greek and Hebrew texts, to holding cottage lectures and beating up recruits for the Sunday school. When, however, he saw them unpacked, and found that they chiefly consisted of old missionary and Bible Society reports, and was gravely told that they were preserved on account of the invaluable sermons at the beginning of each, he laughed to himself, and came to the conclusion that his senior curate's studies and his parish work were not likely to come into very dangerous collision. If the truth must be told, Mr. Dixon felt that in coming to Leaseover, and being relegated to the charge of the roughest portion of its scattered and ignorant population, he was, in some measure, a missionary in a heathen country, and he certainly did find himself in a very outlandish and uncouth one. The very name of the little farm at which lodgings had been taken for him was uncanny, not to say cannibal, for it rejoiced in the appellation of 'Dead Men's Bones,' while the brown furze-sprinkled tract which stretched around it was called 'Conscience Fields,' and the wood opposite was known as 'Concord.' The vicar himself could but think the accommodation was rather rough, and therefore kept the young man at his own house for a day or two while he prepared him by degrees for what he had undertaken. It was on a Monday in the early spring that he announced to his coadjutor, after luncheon, that he had sent off the last of his baggage, and was ready to devote the remainder of the day to seeing him installed in his future habitation. Robert made his adieux to Mrs. Harcourt, and looked with a little dismay at the paraphernalia in which his *chef* was preparing to invest his lower limbs before starting on the expedition.

'You must set up gaiters and hobnails, my friend, for this country,' said Frank, while the curate (who only stood four feet eleven in his stockings) rolled up his trousers and glanced at his town-made boots. They went round by the great house—all gables and ivy, past a well-head of sparkling water, and then up a turning where white violets grew thick as daisies under the hedges, but the centre of which was a conglomeration of cart-ruts and interminable puddles.

'This is Hogtrough-lane,' said the vicar cheerfully, to the small man who plodded beside, or oftener hung behind, him.

'Not a bad name,' was the reply. 'And what do you call that tumble-down-looking cluster of cottages across the fields?'

'The World's End,' he answered, in all good faith; the vicar was used to the name, and did not for a moment think how so odd a designation might sound to a stranger.

Poor Robert thought it must be all a joke, and being entirely devoid of any sense of humour, and having an exalted idea of the dignified position of a pastor of souls, he made a laconic rejoinder, and endeavoured to lead the conversation into what he thought a more profitable channel. This pious design was, however, frustrated by the apparition of a middle-aged unkempt-looking woman sitting down on a heap of stones, with a sack half full of something beside her.

'Good-day to you, Susan,' said the vicar; 'are you having a rest?'

'Yes, sir; but I must be a-gettin' on,' she replied, without the least attempt at rising to drop a curtsy, as Dixon thought she ought to have done.

'Shall I help you up, then?' said Mr. Harcourt, holding out his strong hand, which she took and made good use of, like one who knew that he meant it. 'You must be going our way, for there is no other till we get to the common; I'll take the sack.'

'No, sir, ye marnt du that!' exclaimed Susan.

'I shall, though; I am not going to let you climb this hill with it on your back when I have not so much as a walking-stick to carry. Here goes!' And he swung it over his shoulders, and tramped merrily on, while Susan said,

'I be most shaämed to let ye du it, sir; for 'tis chitlins' (*Anglicè* chitterlings, *i.e.* a pig's entrails), 'and they be'ant claned.'

This explanation made no difference, and the sack was not transferred to its owner till the gate of 'Dead Men's Bones' was reached. There was an apology for a farmyard between that and the house, and a duckpond immediately under the cleanest-looking window, which was that of the curate's sitting-room. Mrs. Harcourt had thoughtfully sent up a few necessaries, and the two men asked for a cup of tea. They had the satisfaction of seeing a tin kettle forthwith dipped in the duckpond and set down hissing and spluttering on the fire, which was the only bright thing in the room; and when it boiled and the beverage was made, they had to drink it without milk, as the inmates never used any themselves, and had no one to send to the nearest house where it was likely that any could be had. Robert's ideal of farm-lodgings was rudely shaken by his new experience: he had pictured to himself a Paradise of new milk and cream, fresh butter, and new-laid eggs; and was disappointed to find he was located in a good-sized cottage, facing a common, where the occupation of a dozen acres of poor land only enabled its tenant to keep a few sheep, a couple of pigs, two sorry-looking horses, and a flock of geese and ducks. Mr. Harcourt, who, on his previous visits, had merely satisfied himself that there were two tolerable rooms containing the necessaries of life, stood aghast at what he saw, and rather unceremoniously cut short some of his curate's remarks on the dangers of Puseyism, as it was then called, that he might go home by a circuitous route which would lead him past a farm where he hoped to be able to order a daily supply of milk for his use. The water question, too, troubled him not a little: he was a total abstainer for example's sake, and his two helpers willingly followed in his steps; but he felt that he could not condemn either of them to drink water from a dirty pond. A few inquiries elicited the fact that Lee lay so high among the hills, and springs were so scarce, that there was not a single house with a well; so he lost no time in arranging that the old man who acted as letter-carrier whenever there were letters to be taken to that remote region of the world should carry a can of spring-water daily up to the curate's lodgings.

The experiment of civilizing the inhabitants of Lee by the moral and religious influence of a resident clergyman did not answer. Perhaps it might have done, had it been Frank Harcourt's lot to live there; but this is difficult to say, and it only remains for us to tell in what manner it came to an end, after barely three months' trial. Towards the close of May, Leaseover was the scene of a combined cattle and pleasure fair; and the vicar's righteous soul was vexed within him at the presence and doings of the gipsies, who

came from far and near to dispose of their horses and tinware, and mend the bottoms of all the dilapidated rush and cane chairs in the neighbourhood. Besides a few of the Rommanys, there was a nondescript horde of vagrants and drunkards, who would hang about for weeks at the little out-of-the-way public-houses, which had been their haunts for years. Like so many country parsons, he was a magistrate, and had set his heart on restraining disorder and drunkenness, as much as possible, within his parish; and succeeded very well himself in the town, where he went from the Two Brewers to the Shoulder of Mutton, and thence to the King and Queen, and gave a friendly look in again upon them all nearly every time he went up or down the street on fair-days. But he did not comprehend that what he, in the strength of his six feet two, and the prestige of his comfortable fortune, could do with impunity, could not be accomplished by another man with equally good intentions but none of his advantages.

He told Robert Dixon to keep a sharp look-out on the Brown Cow up at Lee, and use his utmost endeavours to prevent any disorder. Unfortunately that gentleman had very little idea how to go about it, but supposed the correct thing would be to pay a pastoral visit to the Brown Cow rather late in the evening—exhort Mose Brackley on the propriety of refusing to draw more than one pint of beer for any man, and if the gipsies arrived while he was there, as he half hoped, half feared they might, give them a small lecture on the necessity of forsaking evil ways, turning to respectable methods of getting a living, and, though last not least, to his thinking, shunning any approach to the errors of Popery.

Mose received him with civility, having found by experience that he meant no harm to any one, but in the recesses of his rough mind 'wished that there little chap wur saäfe in's bed,' as he told his gossips afterwards. The curate was still there when a noisy, singing, quarrelsome crew was heard approaching. He had half a mind to ask if he might go out by the back way, but it was too craven a thing to do, and as he sagely reflected gooseberry-bushes afforded no cover, even to a man of his inches; so he plucked up courage to stand his ground to a certain extent, though it well-nigh failed him at the last moment, and he retreated behind the door. Mose, foreseeing that if the parson were ill-treated he should run the risk of losing his license, went out to meet his customers, told them who was within, and extorted something like a promise that they would deal gently with him. The biggest and brawniest gipsy advanced to the Brown Cow, went in, shut the door, and looked the trembling cleric in the face.

'Now,' said he, 'you get out o' this; an' if you don't, my mates'll make ye. *I* could kick a little un like you into the middle o' next week, and by —— I wull tu, if you ain't off!'

Dixon rather ran than walked, but he reached home unmolested; and from that day forth gave the vicar no rest till he consented to give up his pet scheme of locating him at Lee and allowed him to take shelter in the town, and work more wisely under his immediate supervision. Poor fellow! he lived to know the lowest depths of misery, and look back on his abode at Lee as a bed of roses!

Matters went better at Scrubwood. Simeon Snaithe did indeed preach horrors of fire and brimstone, but the people listened to

him, and the wandering Ranters said he gave 'powerful discourses.' No extraordinary adventures befell him; and finding nearly as great a variety of wild-flowers among the fields and woods as can be gathered anywhere except on the lower slopes of the Alps, he compiled a *hortus siccus*, which was the solace and delight of the remainder of his days. He loved and understood his flock; and they so far reciprocated the feeling, that to the end of their connection there was an unmistakable *entente cordiale* between them.

That end came all too soon. The busy cheerful vicar, in the midst of his happy life and prosperous work, was garnered by the Great Reaper, while so many cumberers of the ground were left. He welcomed his sixth babe into the world, and received it publicly into the Church; and having seen its mother smiling once more in her accustomed place, started one December morning to London, on both parochial and personal business. A few days sufficed to finish it—the last purchase was made, the Christmas gifts were all packed up, when, as he crossed the threshold of his brother's house, the warm heart ceased to beat, the active brain to think, and he fell. They picked him up quite dead, and sent word to his home; and the next morning there was an exceeding great and bitter cry throughout the parish, for the friend of all was gone, and they mourned as if one lay dead in every house. Such a scene as his funeral can never be forgotten, and testified to all present what a clergyman may be if he loves his work and his fellows.

Many dignitaries were there, but they thought it kindest to let his curates read the service as best they could, and they took it as the last privilege and greatest boon.

'He said I looked pretty nigh friz [frozen] o' Sunday week and sent me over to the missis for a new flannel petticoat, an' told me to be sure and put it on afore I went home,' sobbed a woman, with a rusty bit of black ribbon tied across an old blue bonnet.

'He guv our Betsy a pint o' porter every day for a fortnight to strengthen her up when she had her misfortin', though it were a love-child!' said a hard-featured man in a smock-frock, with unwonted tears in his eyes.

'When Bill came out of jaäl he guv him a job o' diggin', and axed Muster Warney to taäke him on ag'in; an' 'tis tu year sin, an' he han't never stole no moore,' added a publican and sinner, who had once been his determined opponent.

Amid such comments and testimonies as these he was laid to rest opposite his study-window, and the white-marble cross set up to mark the spot tells passers-by that he was only thirty-six years old when the Master called him.

Robert Dixon was appointed curate in charge till the living was filled up, and then departed to what he spoke of as 'a wider sphere;' while Simeon Snaithe sought for and obtained a curacy in an East-end parish, where he fell a victim to cholera two years later.

Some of us pay an occasional visit to what is to us the shrine of the best of saints—a true man. But

> 'Old times are changed, old manners gone:'

the vicarage is deserted and another built; gas-lamps make darkness visible in the rambling street where there are few to walk; the most elaborate of ritual is performed in a well-nigh empty church; a Mechanics' Institute stands in the old market-place where once the fair was held; and one of the bravest of old Rugby comrades sleeps beneath the elms.

MY HARVEST 'EVE.'

O FOR the glory of harvest time!
I sing it in song and sing it in rhyme,
With blush of the beauteous summer's prime
On its dewy dawns,
And its hazy morns,
And gathered grainage of golden corns.

O for the glory of harvest time!
I weave it in song and sing it in rhyme,
While happy hours their passage chime;
And every breath
So softly saith
'There's life new born with the summer's death.'

O for the glory of golden noon,
And purpled heather, and ripened bloom,
And full-orbed splendour of harvest moon—
The dangerous moon,
That fades so soon
From starry splendour to starless gloom!

* * * * *

O for the peerless face that shines
Out from the lattice beyond the limes!
Harvest queen of my harvest time,
How shall I praise her in song or rhyme,
With her tangled tresses
And eyes divine?

I'll set her amidst the ripened sheaves,
Or golden glory of burnished leaves:
Flowers and fruits in the autumn eves,
Fairest 'Eve' of them all is she—
My harvest queen
From o'er the lea!

O for the lady of brow serene!
How shall I praise her, the manor-queen,
With the ebon gloss on her ringlets' sheen?
Never a tangled tress is seen,
Nor saucy eyes to dance and gleam,
Like eyes that dazzle my rhymes, I ween.

O for a heart to shrine them both!
Either to lose or leave I'm loth,
For love has grown with the harvest growth.
O gathered grain,
Know you this pain?
Can severed ties be blent again?

The grain is gathered, shadows fall
O'er land and lea like sombre pall;
My heart and I are still in thrall;
Your eyes will shine
Starlike to mine,
My Eve, for every harvest time!

RITA.

LONDON SOCIETY.

NOVEMBER 1877.

SIR JAMES PAGET.

The life of a great surgeon is always full of interest for the general public. The late Samuel Warren struck a true vein of public feeling when he commenced his *Diary of a late Physician* with a story illustrative of professional struggles and success. There is the general interest which all take in a career of noble aims and splendid energies, the interest which attaches to the benevolent crusade of science against the ills of humanity, and the special personal interest which suggests that what is the case of our neighbour to-day may be our own case to-morrow. No biographies have been more popular in their day than those of such great surgeons as Sir Astley Cooper, Sir Benjamin Brodie, and Sir Charles Bell. We hope it may be many, many years before a formal biography of Sir James Paget is attempted. But as a great scientific name, as a social force, Sir James has made his mark, and it will be interesting and instructive to see how this has been achieved. No one grudges him the extraordinary success which he has obtained. His name became best known to the public through a single memorable incident. He was the surgical attendant of the Princess, after the regretable fever of her Royal Highness had left an arthritic affection of the knee-joint. Sir James had science; but this incident set the seal of fashion upon science. Everybody who had, or who fancied they had, anything unusual about their knees naturally wished to be like the Princess of Wales, and wished to consult Sir James. Many of her Majesty's lieges even paid the homage of imitative hypocrisy, and got up 'the Alexandra limp,' which quite superseded the previous fashionable contortions of the 'Grecian bend.' The great value of Sir James's professional services had been widely recognised before this time. He was known to have fought a brave professional battle with gallantry and success. Whether in private practice or in the public arena, he stood without stain or flaw. He is a man who has always felt sure of the heartiest sympathies and best wishes of his professional brethren. The young and comparatively unknown medical men who have been under him in hospital work, and have partaken of his hospitalities at Harewood-place, have keenly appreciated the

advice and instruction which they have received. Moreover Sir James is one who well knows how to refuse fees in his practice. It may fairly be said that this is not a personal peculiarity, but one which belongs to both branches of the healing profession. We only trust that his patients leave him some time to attend to himself, and that he may not be one of those who have been conquered by their own successes.

It would, however, be difficult for an outsider to indicate the precise nature of these successes. Sir James Paget is a good man 'all round,' as the saying is. His proper business is surgery, his practice is surgery, but he will give you a sound medical opinion at any time. Many physicians are celebrated for their specialty, and so great is their devotion to their specialty, that it often absurdly tinges the whole of their practice. It is all lung or liver; they are adepts in these cases, and resolve all cases into these. Many surgeons are surgeons and nothing else. The late Sir William Fergusson, whose loss we have had so recently to deplore, was a very great surgeon. He was a marvellous operator. Nothing ever affected his perfect serenity and calm. He attained to the wonderful insight which could achieve results without conscious processes. It is told of him that he was once called in to see a man's foot that appeared to be in bad case. The regular medical practitioner had been fumbling away at the foot an hour and a quarter. Sir William touched it for a few seconds. 'There is something wrong, but I don't know what it is. It's nothing particular, however. He'll be all right in a day or two.' And so it proved. It is perhaps scarcely correct to say that Sir James possesses the same genius and faculty in operating as Sir William Fergusson or as Baron Nélaton. But he has in at least equal strength an at least equal faculty. His judgment is as good as can be on the crucial question when it is the best time for operating. Certainly this is as important a matter as the operation itself. Sir William Fergusson was a great surgeon, and there he paused. He contributed little to his profession, little to the advancement of his art. He shone in actual practice, but not in the theory and learning that belonged to it. In this respect Sir James Paget affords a marked contrast to him. So to speak, he has carefully registered all the facts of his surgical life, thrown them into shape and form, and made them vehicles of continuous instruction. He has realised the fine saying that every man is a debtor to his profession. And no one would desire more than himself that the profession should make further advances, that his own labours may be superseded in the onward march.

There is one spot which is especially associated with his name. We need hardly say that this is the hospital. As a university is always an Alma Mater to an alumnus, so does a medical man faithfully and affectionately regard his hospital. Those exceptional Londoners who study the London sights ought to visit St. Bartholomew's Hospital. It is a richly endowed hospital, independent of Sunday Hospital Fund or Saturday Hospital Fund, with about fifty thousand a year of its own. It relieves some hundred and fifty thousand persons (patients) annually, of whom 6000 are in-patients. It is close by Christ's Hospital, which we trust will soon be removed into pure country air, with resident masters who will really

look after the youngsters. The grand old hospital-gate is one of the best sights in London. Close by, a monumental memorial is fixed to commemorate certain blackened bones, discovered just opposite the gate, and supposed to be those of Smithfield martyrs. It is very pleasant to get away from the narrow, bustling, noisy network of streets about St. Bartholomew's Hospital into the wide silent space within the hospital, especially if it is a time of foliage and flowers, and with the great fountain flowing. The recovering patients are moving about slowly, or resting on chairs and benches. Not so long ago they might amuse themselves by listening to the bleating of sheep and lowing of oxen in the adjacent Smithfield Market. The noisy sounds of old Bartholomew Fair would be wafted into the wards. Close by the spot, Walworth struck down Wat Tyler, and Wallace was executed by his ungenerous conqueror. The great hospital was founded seven centuries and a half ago by Abbot Rayhere, Henry I.'s minstrel, in connection with the church and priory of St. Bartholomew. (Bartholomew, by the way, is identified by theologians with the Nathaniel of the New Testament, for which, *inter alia*, see Father Newman's *Sermons*.) When Henry VIII. confiscated the priory he spared the hospital, being moved thereto by Lord Mayor Gresham, the father of the famous Sir Thomas. He gave it a royal charter, 'moved with great pity for and towards the relief and succour and help of the poor, aged, sick, low, and impotent folk . . . . lying and going about begging in the common streets of the city of London and the suburbs of the same . . . . infected with divers great and horrible sicknesses and diseases.' During the three hundred years from the renewing of the charter the hospital has increased to six times its former extent. The first superintendent after the granting of the charter was Thomas Vicars, the royal serjeant-surgeon, who wrote the *Englishman's Treasure*, which is the first work on anatomy in the language. It was soon discerned by intelligent surgeons that, while attending to their patients, they were building up substantive knowledge, and one of the best arguments in support of hospitals is that they promote the public health by the progress they aid in therapeutics and all methods of surgery. Gradually a medical school grew up. At the era of the Restoration young students were found in the wards, and a few years afterwards a library was formed for their use. Early in the next century leave was given to any surgeon who chose to read lectures on anatomy. At the present time there are reading-rooms and library, laboratories, chemical and medical museums and theatres. Quite recently two new and important features have been added to the foundation. A college has been erected within the walls for the reception of medical students, and a convalescent hospital has been opened at Highgate. Within the walls, too, is the ancient church of St. Bartholomew the Less. Besides being the hospital chapel, it is also the parish church—which makes the chaplain a vicar—with about the tiniest parish in the kingdom, two houses we believe. Many illustrious men have been associated with the hospital—Meade, Harvey, Percival Potts, the two Pitcairns, Brodie, Lawrence—but the great surgical teacher who attracted crowds to the hospital and made its teaching reputation was John Abernethy.

We must now proceed with our sketch of Abernethy's successor. Sir James Paget belongs to a Norfolk family of some considerable standing. His father, Samuel Paget, was a merchant in Great Yarmouth, who died as recently as 1857, at the ripe age of eighty-three; his mother, Elizabeth Paget, passed to her rest in 1843. A simple but most expressive tribute of filial love has recently been paid to their memory by their distinguished son, who has caused a handsome stained-glass window to be added to the church of St. Nicholas, Great Yarmouth. The inscription beneath states that they whose fame it is intended to commemorate, 'and many of their forefathers,' dwelt in the town. 'They were pious, loyal, and gentle lovers of their church and home, bountiful in prosperity, patient in adversity, honoured by friends, reverenced by their children.' Of these parents Sir James Paget was born in 1814, and at the age of sixteen was apprenticed to Mr. Charles Costerton of Yarmouth, for the purpose of learning 'the art and mystery of a surgeon.' The fame of Mr. Charles Costerton as a surgeon has never extended far beyond the limits of his own town; but his distinguished apprentice has publicly, and in no stinted terms, acknowledged the many admirable qualities of this his 'first and good master.' He has also stated that he found in the example and encouragement which were afforded him in these early years of his medical career a valuable incentive to diligent study and research. His apprenticeship lasted for four years, and some interesting reminiscences of that period were related in the address which he delivered at the meeting of the British Medical Association in 1874. At the time of his initiation into the mysteries of his profession the sovereign remedy for every complaint was bleeding. 'There was a practice of vivisection,' he says, 'performed on nearly all market-days on those who wished to be bled, and the early part of my life was spent in the practice. On market-days patients came, and I really scarcely know for what reason, except that it was a good old custom, and the county was then Conservative. They had some discomfort, and wished to be bled; and I bled them usually till they fainted, and the charge for bleeding was one shilling.' Possibly it was the price which induced people to indulge in the luxury; certainly no one could complain that the charge was excessive. Even the man who boasted that his dentist only charged him half-a-crown, though he was pulled three times round the surgery before his tooth yielded to the persuasion of the forceps, did not make a better bargain than the Norfolk rustics at Yarmouth market. The interest, however, which attaches to this allusion of Sir James Paget's to his early experience consists in the opinion which it has led him to form of the value of human blood. He does not regard the loss of any reasonable quantity as being a matter of such serious importance as is usually supposed, and even goes to the length of saying that, up to the point of fainting, it is 'absolutely harmless.' An opinion so contrary to the popular notion, and stated with such boldness, was startling even to the scientific assembly to which it was addressed; but Sir James Paget's great experience entitles him to speak with authority, and it is scarcely possible to overrate the importance of his words.

When the four years of his apprenticeship had expired, the

young surgeon — then twenty years of age—left his native town, and went to London to pursue his studies. He soon connected himself with St. Bartholomew's; and, after a few years, the pupils of the hospital signed a petition to the governing authorities requesting that he might be allowed to lecture to them. The request was granted, and Mr. Paget commenced those entertaining and instructive addresses which soon were the charm and delight of his pupils, and of all who had the good fortune to listen to his words. His reputation as a lecturer is now so generally known that it is scarcely necessary to allude to it, were it not for the opinion so very prevalent that those who closely apply themselves to the pursuit of science usually lack that clearness of expression and facility of utterance which constitute the charm of a pleasing and attractive speaker. That there has frequently been good ground for this opinion is unfortunately too true; but if it is to be acknowledged as the rule, it must be owned that the exceptions are numerous and remarkable. The memory of Faraday's lectures at the Royal Institution, and the almost faultless eloquence of his distinguished successor, Professor Tyndall, might alone be sufficient to remove the stigma which so often attaches to scientific lecturers; but in Sir James Paget we have an orator inferior to none, and with scarcely a rival among the professors of science. Most of his lectures were addressed to scientific audiences, and related to purely scientific subjects: many were published at the time of delivery, either in the various medical magazines, or in the 'Transactions' of the societies before which they were given. The principal ones have, however, been since collected into separate volumes, and published for the benefit of the students of surgery.

The first time that we meet him as an author is in 1842, when, as a demonstrator of morbid anatomy at St. Bartholomew's, he issued a report on the results obtained by the use of the microscope. It is a very complete report of the state of knowledge up to that date; but a whole flood of light has been since obtained, culminating in the discoveries of Dr. Royston Pigott. A few years later it fell to him to prepare a new descriptive catalogue of the Anatomical Museum at St. Bartholomew's. Mr. Abernethy and Mr. Stanley, in 1828, had handed over to the hospital all the preparations, &c., in the museum, and also a catalogue. A new catalogue became necessary, and one was accordingly prepared, and was published in two volumes in 1846 and 1851, with a preface by Mr. Paget. The work indicates an immense amount of patient labour on the part of Mr. Paget. More than a thousand preparations were added after 1851, and a third volume was published, the earlier portions of which were written by him. In 1846 he delivered his first public address to the students of the hospital. He gave a word of caution about medical men being too fond of their fees. It was not so, he tells them, with the Hunters, the Abernethys, the Lawrences; 'for wealth and station were not the loadstone towards which they toiled in laborious days and nights of study.'

The medical profession and the public generally are indebted to Sir James Paget for an extremely interesting literary *brochure*. In 1846 he was the warden of the collegiate establishment of St. Bartholomew, and the lecturer on physiology.

Two centuries before, the great Harvey was physician of the hospital, and promulgated what was perhaps the greatest discovery in physiology which the world has ever known, the circulation of the blood. It has recently been shown by Dr. Willis that this discovery was almost anticipated by Servetus the Spanish physician, who was burned alive at Geneva, mainly by the influence of Calvin. Harvey took twelve years before he published the work, after he had completely demonstrated to his own mind the truth of his opinions. The great discoverer—'physiologiæ lumen, Angliæ immortale decus'—was for thirty-four years connected with St. Bartholomew's, and the happy thought occurred to Mr. Paget that he would bring together everything that had been recorded about Harvey in the journals of the hospital. Many of these notices would probably have only a local and temporary interest, but they could also hardly fail to illustrate the life and character of Harvey, and the medical history of his time. The 'Remains' are thin, but they are all in existence. Mr. Paget prefaced them with a short biography, and accompanied them with various annotations. They begin with entries setting forth that 'Mr. Willm. Harvey, doctor of physick,' came before the governors, 'and is contented to execute the office of the physicon of this howse untill mych'as next, without any recompense for his paynes herein; which office Mr. Doctor Wilkenson, late deceased, held. And Mr. Doctor Harvey beinge asked whether he is not otherwise imployed in any other place which may let or hynder the execucon of the office of the physicon towards the poore of this hospitall, hath answered that he is not.' Mr. Paget drew especial attention to the rules, one of which was 'that no chirurgeon, to save himself labour, take in or present any forth doctor; otherwise the charge for the apothecary's shopp wilbe soe greate, the successe soe little, as it wilbe scandelous to the howse.' At this date surgeons were not allowed to give an 'inward' medicine, even in surgical cases, without sending the cases to the physician. We regret to learn from Mr. Paget that Harvey never resided in the hospital, although the minutes set forth that this would be extremely desirable. At this period the hospital was strictly limited to surgical cases; and it is very gradually that medical cases have been admitted, and a medical staff grown up. To all kinds of readers Sir James Paget's monograph on this system will be found extremely interesting.

Sir James has a brother at Cambridge, the Professor of Medicine, and one of the most distinguished members of the University. There is an interesting mention of him in Bishop Goodwin's remarkable memoir of Bishop Mackenzie, the leader of the Universities Mission in Central Africa. Mackenzie and his sister were staying at Dr. Paget's house, and Dr. Paget said to the latter, 'Consider what would be the view taken by a life assurance company. If your brother should wish to insure his life before going on this enterprise, and were to apply to any insurance company, I feel sure they would not estimate his chance of life at more than *two* years.' The words were prophetic. As a matter of fact, Dr. Mackenzie did not live two years after his arrival in Africa, but died from the effects of African fever.

In 1875 Sir James published his

volume of *Clinical Lectures and Essays.* It consisted chiefly of papers which had previously appeared in medical journals or hospital reports. Though written exclusively for medical students and practitioners, many of the subjects dealt with are of general interest; and in the hands of Sir James Paget even the most technical details cease to be dry. People with weak nerves had perhaps better shun this book. A lecture on 'The Calamities of Surgery' or 'The Various Risks of Operation' would probably have a tendency to agitate rather than to soothe them. Fancy meeting such a statement as this: 'I venture to say that there is no surgeon in large practice, no surgeon to a large hospital, who has not once or more in the course of his life shortened patients' lives when he was making attempts either to prolong them or to make them happier'! Hypochondriacal readers are advised to lay the book aside when they get as far as this. Others who persevere will be comforted to find that a good deal of damage may be done to them short of death, while they are perfectly oblivious of the fact that anything has gone wrong. Sir James mentions the case of one eminent surgeon, who through 'great carelessness' seriously injured a patient. The subject of the operation was so pleased with the treatment he had received, that he presented the operator with a gold snuff-box. 'The surgeon proved himself quite worthy of the gift, for he used to show this gold snuff-box to prove the gratitude which the officers of his hospital were in the habit of receiving from the patients upon whom they conferred the great benefits of charity and skill.'

Sir James Paget does not confine his notice to the calamities of surgeons alone. One essay is on the 'Cases that Bone-setters cure.' A brief extract will show the opinion which he entertains of these practitioners. 'I believe,' he says, 'that in the great majority of cases bone-setters treat injuries of joints, of whatever kind, with wrenching and other movements of them. The proceeding was described to me lately by a gentleman who had a well-marked fracture at the lower end of his radius. He had been to a distinguished bone-setter, who, with a glance at the wrist, said, "You ha' put out your wrist, that's what you ha' done;" then violently stretched and moved the joint; then said, "Now you go and hold that under my pump," and, after the cold *douche*, took his fee. The fracture, being none the better for this treatment, was, at a second visit a few days later, again wrenched, pumped upon, and paid for. But this time much pain and swelling followed, and the patient had the wisdom to call himself a fool and to go to his usual medical attendant, who sent him to me.'

There are some cases in which Sir James Paget thinks the bone-setter's method of wrenching may be beneficial, but in the great majority of cases he disapproves of it. He mentions the case of one girl in the hospital whose chief complaint was her obstinacy, and grimly remarks that 'if a bone-setter had wrenched her joint, it might have served her right, and the pain might have cured her temper.'

If the contemplation of surgical calamities may alarm some readers, there are other lectures which may reassure them. Especially may this be said of six lectures on nervous mimicry, in which allusion is made to the many ailments of which mental disturbance is

the exciting cause. In such cases the cultivation of a more vigorous will is the chief thing to be aimed at. Some patients of this kind, the lecturer justly remarks, appear to have a very strong will, but in reality it is generally a want of will from which they suffer. The patient says 'I cannot;' it looks like 'I will not;' but it is 'I cannot will.'

In a paper on dissection poisons the author gives a description of the illness from which he suffered in consequence of poisoning during a post-mortem examination of a patient dead of pyæmia. The virus penetrated the skin, which was perfectly sound, and quickly laid him up. It was three months before he recovered. His professional brethren thronged to his assistance, and did their best to combat the poison. His acknowledgment of their kindness may be quoted: 'Sir William Lawrence used to say that he had not known any one recover on whose case more than seven had consulted. Our art has improved. I had the happiness of being attended by ten: Sir Thomas Watson, Dr. Burrows, Sir William Jenner, Dr. Gull, Dr. Andrew, Dr. Gee, Mr. Cæsar Hawkins, Mr. Savory, Mr. Thomas Smith, and Mr. Karkeek. In this multitude of counsellors was safety. The gratitude I owe to them is more than I can tell, more than all the evidences of my esteem can ever prove.'

It is interesting to compare with this autobiographical sentence another in which he expresses acknowledgments, especially to Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Stanley, Professor Owen, and Dr. Carpenter; 'from whom, during many years of valued friendship, I have derived at every interview either knowledge or guidance, how to observe or think.' It is to be noticed that a great intellectual history attaches to each of these names, and each would well repay a measure of discussion and research.

Many golden sentences, independent of professional interest, may be culled from his writings. In his address to the students of St. Bartholomew's Hospital on 'The Motives to Industry in the Study of Medicine,' he urges his pupils to keep ever before them the high dignity of their profession, and to strive to realise the ideal of the earnest worker, who 'in toil, yet not in weariness, pursues his way; sowing seed, of which he reckons not whether he shall reap the fruit; content because he is in the path of duty; blest if only he may see or think that he ministers to the welfare of his fellow-men.' No one has deplored more than Sir James Paget the neglect with which the science of physiology has been treated even by educated men; and in a lecture delivered at the Royal Institution in 1854 he eloquently pleaded that a knowledge of it should be extended to all classes of the community. This defect in our educational system is now happily being remedied. The elements of physiology are being taught in our elementary schools to a large extent, and the fact is becoming more palpable that the surest way to preserve the health of the people is to induce them to make themselves well acquainted with the fearful and wonderful mechanism of the human frame. Sometimes in his writings there is almost a tendency to preach; for which, however, we would not desire to quarrel with him: 'I claim for physiology the preëminence among all sciences, for the clear and full analogies which it displays between truths natural and revealed; and I would teach it everywhere, look-

ing for help, by these analogies, to prove the concord between knowledge and belief, and to mediate in the ever-pending conflict between knowledge and belief.' What preëminently distinguishes the writings of Sir James Paget, and which places him in strong contradistinction with his old friend Lawrence, and such modern lights as Huxley and Tyndall, is that strong unwavering religious faith, which not ostentatiously, not indeed without strict restraint, is a constant element in his writings and his character. We will take one very suggestive passage from various others which we might cite. He has been considering in his lectures two kinds of illnesses: the first, where the natural tendency is to get better; and the last, where the natural tendency is to get worse. He says of the first that they evince such strength and width of adaptation to the emergencies of life, that we might think the body was designed never to succumb before the due time of its natural decay. But in the other class 'we trace no fulfilment of design for the well-being of the body; they seem all purposeless or hurtful; and if our thoughts concerning purpose were bounded by this life, or were only lighted by the rays of an intellectual hope, we could not discover the signs of beneficence in violences against nature or in early death such as I have here described. But in these seeming oppositions faith can trace the divine purposes, consistent and continuous, stretching far beyond the horizon of this life; and among the certainties of the future can see fulfilled the intention of the discipline of sufferings that only death might mitigate. And if we cannot always tell what is designed, for themselves, in the agony or the calm through which we see men pass from this world, and cannot guess why, for their own sakes, some are withdrawn in the very sunrise of their life, and others left to abide till night, yet always God's purpose for our own good may be clearly read in the warning that untimely deaths should make us timely wise.' He reminds us of an eminent surgeon who had a chair in the University of Glasgow, and who was drowned in the steamer that went down between Glasgow and Liverpool about a quarter of a century ago. He had been giving a valedictory address to the students of his class before dismissing them for the summer. 'And there is one book, gentlemen,' he said, after enumerating, we suppose, those which might be found serviceable for summer reading, 'which I would recommend—the Bible.' It proved to be the last piece of advice he ever gave them, and sheerly from an intellectual point of view it was the best which he could have given.

There have been many incidents during Sir James Paget's connection with St. Bartholomew's Hospital which have both endeared it to him and made him popular amongst the pupils and friends who have grown up around him. Principal amongst these pleasant associations may be mentioned the presentation of two portraits to himself and Lady Paget about four years ago. The ceremony took place in the magnificent hall of the hospital, the walls of which were already adorned with admirable paintings of those whose work and life have shed lustre upon the fame of St. Bartholomew's. To these is now added the life-like portrait by Millais which his friends on this occasion presented to Sir James Paget.

The office of active surgeon to

the hospital he was obliged to resign early in 1871 on account of failing health, but he was at once elected to the less onerous post of consulting surgeon, and this he continues to occupy. He also holds the office of Surgeon Extraordinary to the Queen, and Surgeon to the Prince of Wales. Independently of this he of course has a large private practice, and his great difficulty is probably to keep it within reasonable bounds. But his love of work makes him unstinted in his labour, while his modesty prevents him from considering this devotion to duty an act of personal sacrifice. His own words when acknowledging the testimonial of his friends and pupils expresses the character of the man: 'I lay no claim to self-denial, as I have all my life loved work, loved my profession, loved my hospital, and loved teaching; and to these I have devoted my life and energies with ever-increasing satisfaction.'

'If you observe Sir James Paget's face,' said a friend to us one day, 'you will see in it the expression of great caution; the expression also of one who is familiar with the phenomena of suffering and of death.' This is so, but not peculiarly so; it is the expression of an immense number of medical men. Such men illustrate the great moral law enunciated by Bishop Butler, that the feeling of compassion, when actively exercised in various cases, becomes more sensitive and keen, and grows blunted when not actively exercised. A truly great surgeon possesses not only, as the saying goes, 'the lion's heart, the eagle's eye, the lady's hand,' but a sympathy as tender as intelligent, and while healing the body seeks to soothe, strengthen, and elevate the soul. F. A.

THE ROMANCE OF OLD LONDON.

No. VI. STONEY-STREET SIGNALS.

'Those City men, what can they know
Of art or culture?' In the Row
Called Rotten thus, not long ago,
A noble lord was heard to mutter
To one, who dared this answer utter:
'They buy, my lord, and, what is more
To artists, who would from their door
The hungry wolf keep back, they pay
For what they buy, so rumours say.'
Scarce may I dare, while in my ears
There linger yet the great man's sneers,
To hint that, though with feeble light
And little leisure, what men write
Or paint I, in my way, enjoy
Perhaps as much as learnèd boy,
Who chants in dilettante phrase
The jargon of artistic praise
Or blame; and though I far may be
Behind the times, what pleases me
I know at once. And once in May,
Upon the walls of the R.A.,
I saw a work that charmed me well,
And round which pleasant memories dwell:
A picture of a gentle maiden,
Her hair with myrtle-blossoms laden,
Who lived beside our river's flow
In Roman London long ago.
I, going home that evening fair,
Just having seen her sweetness rare,
Passed in the train those signals bare
Called 'Stoney-street,' where almost meet
The curving lines to Cannon-street
From London-bridge and Charing-cross.
Then did my fancy backward toss,
Mingling that myrtle-crownèd girl
(Anno 200) with the whirl
With which we rushed across the river,
O'er the vast bridge, that seemed to shiver
Beneath three heavy trains that rolled
Along the cold smooth steel. Then told
I to myself: So pass we o'er,
With whirlwind speed and deafening roar,
The very site, from shore to shore,

That, while the Eagles swayed this land,
By Roman bridge of boats was spanned,
Uniting thus the mighty Way
That north and south the river lay,
Hard, white, and straight, o'er vale and hill;
Through flood and forest, moor and rill,
From Sandwich, washed by ocean waves,
To northern camps and Roman graves,
'Mongst Picts and Scots. This Stoney-street
Beneath us, where the curved lines meet,
Still by its very name recalls
The Causeway, from the river walls
Across the low and marshy ground,
Where, ere the spreading Thames was bound
Within strong banks by Roman skill,
It wandered weakly at its will:
A Stoney-street, that here was sent
To join the Way that still through Kent
O'er many a hill and heath is traced,
Through fruitful lands which then were waste.

You who pass and never heed them,
Leaving that for those who need them—
Signals ugly, signals bare—
Have you ever down the stair
To the road below descended
From that foot-bridge, which is ended
Near us, where the curved lines meet
High above old Stoney-street?
If you have not, come with me;
See what chance may bid us see.

THE SOUTH SIDE: GAMBRINUS'S GARDEN.

Save when business leads the way,
Come not here by light of day;
But if you would see the sight
Look you out a murky night;
When swift clouds each other chasing,
Sullen moonbeams half-effacing,
Break the green and ghostly gleaming,
That with intermittent streaming
Fain would light our cobbled path;
While the wind, in rising wrath,
Howls and laughs around each corner
Like a diabolic scorner,
Or the monarch reigning here,
Great Gambrinus, Lord of Beer.
Then with caution guide your feet
Through the narrow Stoney-street;
Where the whirr and ceaseless humming
Of the brew-house drum-drum-drumming
Joins the clatter of the clogs,
As the cooper sharply flogs

Bungs unyielding from the stave;
While the carman, chilled and grave,
On the shafts impatient sits,
And his horses champ their bits.
Lurid lights from every door
Flash and dance from floor to floor.
Gnome-like figures, scoop in hand,
By each open loop-hole stand,
Guiding safe the smoking grains
Into wagons, carts, and wains.
Turn then from the din and glare
To the dark lane, black and bare;
Where, between the massive walls,
Chill the sickly moonbeam falls.
Mark you well high overhead
Burly sprite in cap of red,
And a garment gleaming white
In the green uncertain light,
Crossing with his phantom barrow
Flying bridge so frail and narrow.
As you watch, perchance beside you
(If good fortune should betide you)
Ponderous portals may unfold,
And within you may behold
Glimpses of the vast domains
Where Gambrinus rules and reigns,—
Great Gambrinus, named with fear
Monarch of this Realm of Beer.
Beer in rivers, beer in pools;
Beer to turn wise men to fools.
Beer in barrels, beer in butts;
Changing homes to ruined huts.
Beer from barley grown instead
Of wheat that makes the poor cheap bread.
Beer to turn to loathsome hags
Women fair, and clothe in rags
Children, from whose puny faces
Want has driven childhood's graces—
Subjects from their earliest year
Of their parents' liege lord, Beer.

L. ALLDRIDGE.

NOTES ON AN 'OLD MASTER.'

In the picture before us—the 'Night Watch,' or, as it ought to be called, the 'Burgher Guard of Amsterdam'—we have one of the most famous works of the Miller of Leyden's son.

Genius is an inexplicable thing. It is all very well to define it as the capacity for taking infinite trouble. But that definition is only a half truth, touches in fact only one of genius's many phases. Genius will spend any amount of labour in working out its idea, but it is not to its capacity for taking pains that the origin of the idea is due. Genius is a mighty discoverer. It perceives affinities hidden from ordinary minds, and, with its infinite capacity for taking trouble, brings them from their obscurity, and makes them so palpable, that henceforth they are seen of all, and become part of the common property.

Rembrandt was a painter of genius, if ever there was a genius among painters. His love of art and his capacity for art were innate. The son of a well-to-do malt-miller at Leyden, where he was born in 1606, his father sent him to the Latin school of his native city, intending him to proceed to the university to study law. But law had no charms for the youth, who was bent on being a painter. His father wisely yielded, and placed him with Van Swanenburg, of whom nothing is known, except that he had the reputation of being one of the best painters in Leyden. With him Rembrandt remained some three years, and then, as was customary in those days, took lessons of Pieter Lastman at Amsterdam, and Jacob Pinas at Haarlem. The critics have, naturally enough, sought to discover in his early works the influence of his teachers. Especially they fancy they can trace a resemblance to the manner of Lastman, some of whose works, or some attributed to him, may still be seen in the Rotterdam Museum, at Berlin, and elsewhere. Lastman possessed much readiness of composition, and a sort of clumsy facility of handling; was a man of some celebrity in his day, and was even called to paint a church in Copenhagen. But as to acquisition of style from Lastman or any one else, Rembrandt is entirely innocent. What he learned from his teachers was the mastery of his tools—what every original man must learn before he can give his genius free play. To which ever of his teachers he was most indebted, whether to all in a measure, or mainly to his own observation and diligent study and practice, when he returned home from Haarlem he was already an accomplished painter, as far as the technicalities of painting are concerned, as his earliest pictures, and he painted very early, abundantly testify.

But in style he was absolutely his own master. In it he had no predecessor, and, though he has had many imitators, he has had no successor. Whatever be the value of his style, he is alone in it and unapproachable.

Most authorities agree that Rembrandt painted in his father's mill, and observed there those

peculiar effects of light and shade —the strong concentrated solitary light and surrounding gloom—which in after years became so distinctive of his style. It may be so, and probably was. But if so, the thought was long in ripening. His early pictures have no such peculiarity.

The watching of the bright spot of light from the small single opening cut for air and light near the roof of the mill, as it made its way in the course of the day across the floor or along the wall, and illuminating first one and then another of the shapeless pieces of lumber that encumbered the room, might have stimulated the imagination of the painter as the fall of the apple is said to have stimulated the mind of Newton; but the power to fasten on and realise the suggestion was there already. In truth Rembrandt must have possessed an eye curiously sensitive to light and dark. He may, indeed, be almost said to have thought in chiaroscuro. Plain as this appears in his paintings, it is even more evident in his marvellous etchings. Yet dealing, as he does in both paintings and prints, in the broadest masses of shadow, in depths of fathomless and impenetrable gloom, he displays at the same time a singularly keen and delicate perception of, and feeling for, the tenderest gradations of tint.

Rembrandt has been styled a great colourist. It may shock his more resolute admirers to say so, but I believe his sense of colour was very imperfect. He certainly had no intense feeling for colour as colour like Titian or Rubens, or even as tone like Giorgione. Rembrandt used colour amply, but it was always subservient to the light and shade. Generally, indeed, it is not merely subordinated to the light and shadow, but is more or less lost in it or absorbed by it. His colour is but an enriching of the shadow or a vivifying of the light. But in that sense it is very sweet, very harmonious, sometimes grand and organ-like in the richness, fulness, and solemnity of its tone.

The picture before us is a very remarkable example of Rembrandt's distinctive qualities as a painter. It is the largest picture Rembrandt ever painted, and one of the most famous. It now hangs in the Museum of Amsterdam, but was formerly in the Stadthouse, where, almost a century ago, Sir Joshua Reynolds saw it, and was disappointed. 'So far, indeed,' he wrote, 'am I from thinking that this picture deserves its great reputation, that it was with difficulty I could persuade myself that it was painted by Rembrandt; it seemed to me to have more of the yellow manner of Bol.' Reynolds was looking for colour and did not find it, hence his disappointment. Other critics, referring to the 'yellow manner' which Sir Joshua notes, find in this picture the normal example of what they term Rembrandt's 'golden tone,' which they regard as distinctive of his 'second period.' Rembrandt always loved a dominant tone, and in the best days of this picture its dominant tone may have been golden. But the picture is now too much blackened and obscured to allow of any just appreciation of its primal harmonies.

Popularly the picture is known as the 'Night Watch,' but this is clearly an error. It is a daylight scene, though the excessive darkening of the colours has so intensified the always prevalent gloom that by those who now see it it is usually taken for a 'night piece.' Really it was intended, there can be little doubt, to represent the

Burgher Guard of Amsterdam departing from their hall for some shooting-match or other festival. Mr. Wornum, indeed, describes the guard as 'apparently just returned;' but the movement of the scene and the action of the men show pretty clearly that they are mustering preparatory to the start. They have not yet fallen into marching order, but they are making ready. The drummer is busy beating the call, the guard are handling their weapons.

The Burgher Guard seem to have been wondrous fellows, both for dress and weapons. The sight of them marching out would have been enough to drive a Volunteer Martinet crazy. Neither body-covering nor head-covering was in any sense *uniform*, and their weapons were as various as their costumes. They were the Amsterdam Volunteers of the seventeenth century, but very unlike the British Volunteers of the nineteenth. Probably, however, they were very much like our contemporary City Train-bands—men who might not pass muster at a modern parade, but men who, in their way, could fight well and dress richly in those olden days.

The picture was no doubt painted for the guild, and painted to occupy a conspicuous and dignified place in the Guildhall. The members were among the wealthiest and most influential of the citizens, and this picture was intended to perpetuate the likenesses of the leading men among them. The picture bears the date of 1642, and it is no small testimony to the position held by Rembrandt in the City that he should have received the commission for so important a work. But by this time he was a tolerably old, and no doubt honoured, citizen. He left the paternal mill when two-and-twenty, and settled as a painter at Amsterdam, trusting to his etching-needle for support while sitters and patrons were slow of coming. We may conclude he early became a fairly prosperous citizen—we know he was a thoroughly prosperous painter—as, within five or six years of his settlement at Amsterdam, he married a wealthy burgher's daughter, and became an active buyer of native and Italian pictures, drawings, engravings, and carvings, and all sorts of costly painters' properties, to be sold, alas, for a mere song when evil days came—days, happily, with which we have nothing here to do.

But in those flourishing days, with fame as a painter every day growing and widening, with a wealthy (and we may assume a clever and pretty) wife, a good house, and genial manners, it is easy to see that he would be a welcome associate of the Burgher Guard, if indeed he was not one of its members, and his fondness for picturesque costumes and weapons and striking effects would lead him often to their gatherings. When, then, he came to be commissioned to paint a portrait piece to include their captain and other officers, it is easy to understand how readily he would seize on the opportunity to make it a grand picture of the setting forth of the Guard fully dressed and armed for one of their principal festivals, instead of a merely level commonplace portrait group. But to make it the muster in the hall, with the larger part of the hall wrapped in darkness, and the gleam of bright light, wandering deviously over only a few of the leading personages, to concentrate, as in a focus, on one of inferior grade, showed that the painter must have possessed unbounded confidence in the magic of his pencil to charm

the arrogant and soothe the obscure. When new, the picture must have been one of marvellous brilliancy, picturesque splendour, and powerful effect. Whether the commanders of the guild were satisfied with it as their portrait piece is not, I believe, told. They well may have been so; for though they are only a part of the scene, they are nobly placed and honourably treated.

If fame has not told the names of the Burgher Guard, chance has preserved them. Pasted on the back of the picture is a list, written in a contemporary hand, of all the persons represented. Thus there is the tall and burly Captain Franz Cock, and beside him his trusty Lieutenant Willem van Ruÿtenburg. Ensign Visscher is duly noted, and so are the Sergeants Reyner Engel and Rombout Kempen, and the little man who is beating the drum so vigorously in the right-hand corner, who rejoices in the sonorous designation of Jan van Kampoort. Many more names there are, but to us they are only names.

The engraving shows the figures, and especially the background figures, far more distinctly than they can now be seen in the picture itself, and it is so sharply and clearly executed as to render further description superfluous. But it may be well to add that there is in the National Gallery a small copy or replica of the Burgher Guard, painted, as is said, by Rembrandt himself; but if not wholly by his own hand certainly by one of his scholars or assistants, and probably under his supervision, which, from its better state of preservation, will give a truer notion of the primal colour and general effect of the glorious original than even the great picture at Amsterdam.

JOHN'S WIFE.

By C. M. Hawksford,

AUTHOR OF 'WHO WINS MISS BURTON? A TALE OF THE LONDON SEASON.'

CHAPTER VI.

That winter was remarkably long and severe. During all January, February, and March we had a continuance of frost and snow, accompanied by bitter east winds. Dora was not particularly strong, and my brother's care of her was unremitting. Mr. Childers had left the neighbourhood, but was expected back at Easter, as Lady Somerville intended getting up some amusements during the recess, a time they always spent at Woodsleigh.

It was towards the latter end of March that one morning my brother received a letter, summoning him to the deathbed of a friend, a man with whom he had once lived as a brother both at college and in after-years. They had not met since John's marriage, for he resided in Scotland, and had lately been more or less an invalid; but at such a time his earnest request could not be refused, and my brother decided to go. Leaving home in other days had not been the struggle to him it was now, and as the time approached, he became more and more reluctant to leave his wife.

The morning that he went was ushered in by a cold east wind, which bore on its wings flakes of snow that lingered here and there in patches, and then melted away only to be succeeded by more. John had to start very early, but Dora was up to make his breakfast, in spite of all remonstrance; and as she clung to him at the open door, her face was so unusually pale that he said, as he quietly untwined her arms,

'It is too cold for you standing here. Good-bye, my darling; I shall soon be back.'

The tears she could not repress trembled and fell.

'I cannot bear your leaving me!'

'You will have Harriette. Harriette, remember I give Dora into your keeping; watch over her as jealously as I would;' and as he said this, he turned and kissed me; then one more embrace to Dora and he was gone—at least, I thought he had—and Dora had rushed up to her own room, when the hall-door reopened, and John, looking very white, came in, and whispered hurriedly,

'Harriette, you will take care of my little Dora? I make you responsible for her. God bless you, Harriette!'

I made responsible for Dora! Well, I was John's sister, and I would do my duty.

For the first few days we both remained indoors; then another fall of snow lightened the heavy air, and we managed to get out for a little exercise in the swept walks, with their glittering banks of snow on either side.

On the day that we expected it, a letter came from my brother. He had reached his journey's end in safety; and as his friend was better than he expected to find him, he hoped his return to The Cedars might in consequence be all the sooner, but *when* he could not then say. This letter gave

Dora great pleasure. But it was not the *only* one she received, and the other apparently contained news of the deepest interest; for long after my brother's had been put aside, I saw her reading and re-reading it.

'I hope you have no bad news, Dora?' I said.

'Not particularly,' she answered; but the colour mounted to her cheeks; the letter was hurriedly thrust into her desk, and I saw it no more.

Dora, however, was not the same; she was restless and anxious, lingering often by the window, and watching for the postman with an anxiety which she feigned to be entirely on John's account, although she knew no letter could come from him except at a certain hour.

Had Mr. Childers returned to Woodsleigh, and was the letter from him?

The next day I asked Dora if I could post her letters; for I had seen her writing, and I knew they must be sent to Kingsnorth. She reddened as she thanked me, but explained that they had already gone by the gardener.

'You might have asked me, Dora, if I had any,' I said, feeling that this had been a *ruse* to prevent my seeing the directions.

'I did; but Anne assured me you had not.'

'Anne had better have minded her own business.'

When I came down-stairs again with my walking things on I asked Dora, as the afternoon was so fine, if she would not come out.

'No, I would rather not,' she replied—'if you don't mind going alone?'

'But my brother would, I am sure, think it good for you, *unless* you have a cold?'

'I think I have,' she said hurriedly; and as she spoke, she shivered, and drew closer to the fire.

I went out, but kept near the house, giving up the expedition I had intended, in order to watch if any visitors called. I was the constituted guardian of Dora in John's absence, and I would do my duty.

That night Dora proposed that we should retire early to bed, and I willingly acquiesced. Dora never sang now; John was away, and the evenings were somewhat heavy. At ten o'clock we wished good-night and parted; but as I was not tired, when I got to my room I wrapped myself in a warm dressing-gown, sat down in the armchair before the fire, and took a book. The time slipped away till the Kingsnorth church-clock struck the hour of twelve. I had not fancied it so late. I hurried up, and began finishing my preparations for the night, when I fancied I heard a light step pass my door, and go down the front stairs. I waited a few moments; then, extinguishing my light and closing the door after me, I stole out into the passage.

A cold wind came blowing up the stairs, and I could see that the door of Dora's room was slightly ajar. I grasped the banisters for fear of falling. What could have happened? What was going to happen? Making an effort at self-command for the sake of my absent brother, I sufficiently rallied to be able to creep down-stairs also; then I turned the angle in the passage, and knew the worst.

The pale moon and stars were shining on the white snow outside, and two dark figures were standing beneath the portico. One was a girl, and that girl *my brother's wife;* the other a tall man, but so muffled up as not to

be distinguishable. The man had his arm passed round the girl's waist, and her head was resting on his shoulder, whilst their low eager voices came whispered softly on the night breeze.

Dora—could it *really* be Dora? Dora, for whom *I* had been made responsible, so utterly lost, so *false* and *shameless!*

I felt too spellbound to move or speak, so I only watched Dora, who, regardless of that bitter night, was standing there before me with her little slippered feet resting on the cold wet stones, alternately urging or entreating her companion. Presently the man stooped and kissed her, saying, as he drew with her sufficiently near to my hiding-place for me to catch the words,

'God bless you, Dora! I do not know *what* I might have done without you; and I pray that the love of my future life may in some measure repay you,—in some degree atone.'

'Hush!' she replied. 'You need not say that, for I know it; and you *must* go now at once.'

He lingered a minute; but she pushed him gently aside, closed the door softly, drawing the bolts and chains, and then stole upstairs to her own room. As soon as I had a little recovered from my bewilderment, I followed, turned the handle, and confronted her.

A stifled cry broke from her lips. I shut the door behind me.

'Dora, I have come here to-night to ask for some explanation of your shameful conduct. What have you to say?'

She had been standing, but she sank into a chair, and covered her face with both her hands.

'My poor brother when he went away left you in my care, and—Heaven help us both!—he wished to make *me* responsible for your conduct whilst he was absent. What am I to say to *him?*'

Dora got up, and, coming slowly towards me, laid her hand on my arm with a gesture of mute entreaty. I shook it off, and it fell heavily at her side.

'This was premeditated,' I said, as I glanced at her dress, which was the same she had worn during the evening—'a plan arranged between you and—'

'Hush, Harriette! *Indeed*—indeed—I am not guilty, as you think. I have done nothing I am ashamed of.' And as she said this, she raised her white face, and looked entreatingly in mine. 'Can you believe me, Harriette, without questioning?' *Without questioning?* Was I looked upon as so easy a dupe? Did she expect me to connive at her conduct? 'Harriette, I have often felt before, as I feel now, that you think me unworthy of John's love; but, for his sake, I ask you to spare me, though you may never like me.'

'I don't know why you should say I have not liked you, Dora. I warned you before you married of the probable misery such a marriage would bring, and I warned *him.* Now that is past, and I can only try to shield my poor brother in the present.'

'O John!' she exclaimed, 'if you were only here!'

'I know, by what you have already said, that you will give me no explanation, no confidence; but I insist that my brother shall be told.'

'I will tell him—tell him *all*—when he comes,' she said eagerly.

'No, Dora; I value my brother's honour too much to wait for that. You must write to-night—at once; and I shall see that the letter goes away early in the morning. You must make a full confession to him, or'—she held up her

hands again—'I shall write myself.'

'*Harriette, I cannot!*'

'My unhappy brother! Dora,' I said, laying some writing-materials before her, 'if you are on the brink of any fatal step, this confession may recall you—may save you.'

She sat down in a chair, and raised the pen between her small trembling fingers; then, suddenly throwing it from her, she stood again before me.

'Harriette, I have done no wrong; but I cannot, dare not, explain the circumstances which have happened to-night even to John, *unless* he were here; and although I know it seems very strange to you, if you will not believe my word, *I must* let it be so: but, Harriette, I entreat you not to be so hard upon me; I entreat you to speak kindly to me, for I am very unhappy.'

I pushed her from me. That white face and long fair hair might have appealed to some man—might have deluded *him;* but I was only a woman, strong in my sense of *duty*.

'Dora, I respect *actions*, not words. A circumstance such as has happened to-night, and which you refuse to explain either to him or to me, carries guilt on its very face. If I had my will, this roof should not shelter you another hour; I would turn you out as remorselessly as if you were a beggar from the streets. But I have promised my brother to be responsible for you, so that I must give you back again to him, to act as he thinks best. I shall write to him; and in the mean while you will not leave this room.'

Dora sank upon her knees and burst into tears. I looked back as I left her; she was still kneeling, and reminded me of the pictures of the Magdalene; but, alas, I feared, with none of her penitence! I turned the lock, withdrew the key, and went again to my own room.

CHAPTER VII.

At least half that night I spent in writing. I explained to my brother every minute detail. I did not spare or extenuate; I simply spoke as to what I had seen and heard. Two or three times after I had folded the letter and put it away, I stole softly to Dora's room-door; but, hearing no sound, refrained from entering, and it was not until the gray tints of the coming day had broken through the darkness of the night, that I lay down and slept. It was about seven when I woke again, and not wishing the servants to suspect anything, I got up hastily, and went to Dora's room, turned the lock very gently, and entered. Dora had never been to bed, never even undressed; she was half-sitting, half-reclining in the armchair, with her head resting on the table, her hair still hanging round her, and her face so deadly white that for a moment I was startled; but she was only sleeping.

'Dora,' I said, hurriedly laying my hand on her shoulder, 'you must undress and go to bed; I *insist* upon it.'

She started when I spoke, and, shivering with the cold, looked up at me as one who dreams.

I began unfastening her clothes, and as she made no resistance, I speedily succeeded in making her lie down, and a few minutes after she slept again. Could that slight noise I had only fancied to have heard in the night been Dora's footsteps pacing up and down? Alas, how guilty the conscience that had led to such unrest!

By the postman who was to

have taken my letter, one arrived from John; so I held it back in case he might be coming, and taking John's letter to Dora's bedside, gave it into her hand, and watched her whilst she read. It was but a few lines, to say he intended being with us that very afternoon; and as it was a two days' post, we should not hear again, but might expect him.

'Dora,' I said, 'I have already written my letter to him; now it will be unnecessary to send it; but remember, if you do not tell John everything, *I* shall.'

She made no reply, but I saw by the trembling of her head and shoulders that she was sobbing. Was it fear? Was she afraid to encounter my brother? It looked like it, and intense pity came to his sister's heart, a sister who would never have given him a moment's heedless pain. My poor John!

Dora got up, but did not leave her room, and naturally I did not quit the house. My enforced guardianship was lessening into hours, but I would do my duty to *the last.* The day waned, but no John came; night slowly advanced, and was with us, but still no John. I went up to Dora's room.

'He cannot come now; we must give him up for to-night,' I said.

She looked at me with an expression of despair in her face for one moment, then burst into tears.

'This is nonsense, child. He will be here to-morrow.'

'You do not think anything can have happened to him?'

'Perhaps his friend is worse; I can think of nothing else.'

She looked so relieved, that the suspicion that she was acting flashed across me; at all events she was best alone, so I left her, and turned the key. The next day brought another letter from John, written immediately after the last. It was as I thought it might be: his friend had died, just too when they considered his symptoms most favourable, so that under the circumstances he would be obliged now to remain for the funeral. He could not, then, be with us for nearly a week? I should have another week's anxious watching. And my letter? If I sent it, would not John, in spite of everything, hurry back? I made up my mind to wait, and post it so that he might receive it on his last day, and yet have some little time given him to consider what course to take with Dora. Dora I could only guard as I had done before, never leaving her, never allowing her any opportunity of sending away letters unseen by me. She wrote to John, but what she said of course I did not know. I could not treat her as I had once done; even her pale sad face made no appeal, for why was it sad? Doubtless because she had failed in carrying out her plans—plans which somehow I felt convinced were mixed up with Mr. Childers.

Only the night before my brother's return, and just when I thought my guardianship was *really* over, a circumstance occurred which baffled all belief. I had begun to think Dora penitent, and almost fancied that there might yet prove to be extenuating circumstances connected with her meeting this strange man, but as it turned out that night, all my first convictions came back with redoubled force.

I had visited her room, as usual, the last thing before going to bed, and, after leaving her quite safe as I imagined, had turned the key of her door. Dora had never made any remark on my doing this, or indeed seemed aware of it, going about like one in a dream, till I had almost rather she had risen and resisted me. I fancied

her *crushed;* but, alas, I was mistaken, and all the depths of her artifice had yet to be revealed. The snow had melted away, and a heavy rain was falling. At first I thought a noise outside my window was only the drops pattering from the trees; but I paused and listened. Was that, could that be, Dora's window gently opening? I blew out my light, drew back the curtain, and distinctly saw again the figure of a man standing on the walk beneath.

In another moment Dora's arm and hand became visible; then a letter or packet was thrown down at his feet. I saw him stoop and hurriedly pick it up; could distinguish the sound of voices, though no words reached me; heard the window again closed, and watched the man vanish down the walk.

When it was over I sank into a chair. Was this the end of all my care? Had this girl baffled me so completely? I got up hastily, and went to her room. She was still standing by the window, as if wishing to catch a last glimpse of some one outside. I stepped across, and seizing her roughly by the arm, shook her, as I said,

'Dora, how dare you have done what you have done to-night?'

For a moment an angry look flashed into her eyes; then she said faintly,

'I am not well. You are cruel, Harriette; you must have mercy.'

'Mercy, and on *you!* I had rather have seen my brother in his quiet grave than married to a woman so utterly fallen as you are.'

'Indeed, Harriette,' she exclaimed, clasping her hands imploringly, 'you are mistaken! Only believe me, Harriette; only try and be less hard upon me.'

'I might have been so yesterday, weak fool that I was; but to-night, *no!* Believe in you after what I have just seen, when your lover has but now gone from beneath your window, when he received a letter from you which I myself saw given? *Yes,* I believe you in one way, but it is only worse, infinitely worse, than I thought before.'

'I know,' she urged, 'appearances are against me; but it is not as you think, Harriette; it is not indeed.'

'My brother returns to-morrow, and he can then act as he pleases; but till then I shall not leave this room, *nor will you!*'

'You have no right,' she said proudly, 'to treat me like this, Harriette, and I will *not* bear it; though you are his sister, *I am his wife* and the mistress of his house, and will not be spoken to as if I were a child.'

'Your actions are not those of a child, Dora; but if you wish it, you may assert your claims, call up your servants, and have *me* turned out; but remember I shall take care to explain to them the reason. I shall in self-justification tell them all I saw to-night and the other night. Are you prepared for this?'

Dora did not answer, but she turned away and threw herself down upon her bed.

'I shall remain here,' I said; 'but I will not speak to you. I leave you to your own thoughts and to penitence, because I trust a time may yet come when you *will* repent.'

She made no answer, so I drew my chair to the fire. It was a long night. Sometimes I dozed off, and then, starting up in a troubled dream, fancied Dora had escaped me, only to be convinced she had not by seeing the dark outline of a figure on the bed. I don't know if she slept, but she lay there all those hours quite still

and motionless. Once or twice I was tempted to throw some covering over her, for, as the morning dawned, the fire died out, and it grew chill and cold; but I did not, I had no pity. Better, I said, she should die, than that my brother's heart should be broken.

When it was broad daylight I rang for Anne, and telling her that her mistress was not well, desired her to bring up some tea, and remain till I returned. Then I went to dress, and waited for John's coming and the revelations of the day—a day which has never been effaced from my memory, and never will be as long as I live.

At twelve o'clock I was standing by the portico. I had come down in order to break to my brother, before he saw his wife, as much as I knew of her unworthiness. I saw in one moment by his face that he had received my letter. It was almost gray in its whiteness, and his hand trembled as he seized mine, like a very old man's. I drew him gently into the drawing-room and closed the door.

'Go on, Harriette,' he said; 'tell me the worst. Is—is she still here?'

My poor John! I put my arms round him, and my tears fell on his face; he returned the embrace, whispering as he did so,

'Speak, Harriette; I think I can bear it.'

I told him all I knew, and all I suspected. He listened, but made no reply; asked but one question, and that was not till I had finished.

'Where is she, Harriette?'

I drew the key from my pocket and gave it to him. He looked startled as he took it; but without another word left the room, shutting the door behind him.

CHAPTER VIII.

Hours passed slowly away, and still John was closeted in his wife's room, whilst I was left to wonder at the result of an interview that must be so painful to both. Towards the end of the afternoon hurrying footsteps convinced me something unusual was happening, and opening my door, I saw our doctor crossing the passage. Was Dora ill? I beckoned to Anne. She did not know, as none of the servants had been allowed in her mistress's room; but she feared it must be so, for the doctor had been sent for, and looked very grave.

I would, I must see John. 'Go and whisper to him, Anne,' I said, 'that I want to speak to him for *one moment*. I want to know if I cannot come in and be of any service; go, and return quickly.'

She did so, and the message she brought filled me with vague alarm.

Mr. John required no assistance, and begged Miss Harriette would dine as usual, for he was not coming down.

'Has he eaten nothing, Anne?'

'Nothing since he came.'

'And he has been travelling all night. My poor brother!'

Dinner was placed on the table, but I could take nothing. I kept creeping up-stairs, vainly trying to catch a glimpse of John, or hear something more of Dora; and it must have been as late as nine in the evening, when at last John came into the drawing-room where I was sitting. I rose to meet him.

'Tell me, John,' I exclaimed, 'what is all this? what has happened? what have I done that I should be kept in ignorance of things that are going on in this house?

He put out his arm, as if to prevent me from approaching nearer to him.

'What have you *not* done, Harriette? You are my only sister, and we have lived together so many years, still I find it hard not to hate you to-night.'

'John,' I cried, 'has it come to this?'

'When I went away, I left Dora in your care, dependent on your love and sympathy. Heaven only knows what dark forebodings came over me as I did it; but you knew she was not strong, and I thought for *my* sake—'

'Yes, John, it was all done for *your* sake. Do you think I have suffered nothing in carrying out what I so fully believe to have been my duty?'

'Your *duty*, Harriette, must have tallied with your inclinations, for your conduct has been throughout the tyrannical revenge of a *jealous* and *vindictive* woman.'

'John! and this from you!'

'Hear me out, Harriette. There has not been a day since I married, that you have not tried to sow the seeds of discord between us. I thank Heaven that the utter guilelessness of Dora's nature has made the many little shafts with which you have endeavoured to wound us both fall harmless; but if I had ever guessed things could have gone as far as they now have, I would have placed Dora beyond your reach.'

'John,' I exclaimed, all my pent-up woman's heart bursting at his accusations, 'when I was left in care of your wife, and saw what I saw, I tried to save you both. You have heard Dora's version, you may perhaps disbelieve *mine* altogether; but as I am standing now before you, I think her utterly unworthy of your love.'

John's face grew even paler as he spoke, but his voice was strangely calm.

'If you think, Harriette, that Dora has not confided everything to me, you are again mistaken; and for her sake I must still in some degree intrust that confidence to you. The letter which first excited your suspicions was from her brother; the man with whom you saw her standing beneath the portico was the same —*George Marchmont.* I think you know I had been trying to get him employment, and about Christmas succeeded. Unfortunately he got into debt, and, led on by a bad companion, committed an act—I won't say what, but a breach of trust, which brings him within the power of the law. In this extremity he fled, and made his way here, meaning to confide in me as well as Dora. Finding I was absent, and being haunted by the fear of discovery, he insisted on Dora solemnly promising not to breathe a word about him to any one, even you, and not to trust a line on paper, which promise she made. His second visit was in order that he might obtain from her such slight assistance in money as she could give him, so as to enable him to reach Liverpool, and a packet containing this was thrown out of her window on his second visit. Now, Harriette, you know all; and had you shown *one particle* of womanly feeling, my little Dora need not have suffered so terribly as she has done.'

I sank into a chair. 'You have heard the version of my conduct from Dora. Dora now has no other wish but to separate us.'

'You are mistaken, Harriette. Dora has never once blamed you; and it has only been by slow degrees that all the circumstances of the past week have dawned upon me; and if I had found it out in no other way, I should have seen it in her face—a face so changed, Harriette, that, as I said

before, I have it in my heart to-night to *hate you.*'

'John, I will leave this house; I will not stand any longer between you and happiness. Far rather be an outcast from my brother's home, than wronged as I have been to-night.' And as I said this, my tears almost choked me.

'You may leave me or not, Harriette, as you think best. I have only one thing more to say. If you wish it, my home is still yours; but on the distinct understanding that you never again seek in any way to come between me and the woman I have made *my wife.* God only knows if it is not too late, or if she will ever rally from the sufferings she has undergone; but remember this, Harriette, should she *not,* I could never, under any circumstances, bring myself back to live again the old life we once lived together.'

'O John!' I cried, 'for the sake of all those past years, unsay what you have said to-night. Think of my love for you. Think—' But he had turned away, and, without looking back, closed the door, remounted the staircase, and shut himself again in Dora's room.

He cared, then, so little for me or for what I felt—I, who was once all the world to him; he could accuse me as he had done, and leave me in anger, thinking and speaking of me as a jealous revengeful woman—I, who had once been his standard of all that was truest and best. How the times of long ago rushed before me, when as a mere girl I had waited his return home from school with loving impatience, shielding his faults, helping him in his difficulties! Then what long summer days as children we had spent together in our little gardens, and always united in our slightest wishes! Again in his absence at college and abroad, how I had pined to see his face! By the bedsides of my parents, even in their dying moments, the thought of John had been uppermost; and when he did come, how completely his presence rested me, worn as I was with anxiety and watching! Perhaps had he married then, when I feared but expected it, I might have reconciled myself; but I remember even at that time how I dreaded the sight of any of my own girlhood's friends, to whom I thought he was more attentive than to others; and so willing was I to sacrifice all to him, that to me marriage offered no attractions. And so years had passed, and we had grown old together, to be at last entirely estranged—estranged, too, by a mere child, the object of an infatuated love; a girl who had robbed me of everything that had hitherto made life worth having, and left me that night a desolate miserable woman. Surely my heart would break.

CHAPTER IX.

I THINK my first impulse was to go away at once, to live no longer under a roof where my brother's bitter and unjust reproaches kept ringing in my ears. But I did not. I could not bring my mind to contemplate a parting that *might* prove final. Was Dora really so ill, or was this only a part of the scheme that was to alienate me? Weeks passed, and I never saw her—was denied all admittance to her room. John sometimes took his meals downstairs, but more often I was left in solitude; and even when he did sit down to table with me, he was no longer the same: all con-

fidence had given place to a cold politeness, which was very hard to bear.

Anne had been established as a regular attendant on Dora, and another servant supplied her former place; and it was from Anne I first learnt an event was speedily expected, which, if all went well, might come as a second barrier between me and John. Dora was so far from strong that she remained entirely up-stairs, John's dressing-room having been converted into a temporary sitting-room. She saw no visitors, and of course went nowhere; Mr. Marchmont came occasionally, but only remained a few hours. I never asked to be admitted, and received no invitation to do so. Sometimes in the evening I caught the sound of Dora's voice singing to John; but it never lasted long, and was certainly very low and weak. What if she should die? I put away the idea, for it brought with it John's solemn protest.

It was towards the end of May, in the golden spring-time, when the birds were singing as they built their nests, and everything in Nature was bursting into the full resurrection, that a tiny infant's eyes opened also, and another being was added to our household. I was no comfort to John in that trying hour. I often saw him, but I doubt if he saw me; he looked pale and anxious, but made no appeal, although I feared all was not going right. Doctors went and came; every step was hushed, and nothing but a little wailing cry broke the stillness. Dora was said to be *very* ill a day or two after the birth of her child; a change for the worse had taken place, and Anne told me a celebrated physician was called in consultation, as they feared her sinking. Days of terror passed over me, but they brought no hope, no comfort.

Once, only once, I caught a glimpse of Dora. I knew that she must not see me, for fear of being agitated; but her door had been left partly open, and I had stolen to it through the dressing-room. She was lying back, her head supported on John's shoulder. The spring day was just fading, and through a partly-opened window a broad ray of sunshine came creeping in, whilst the cool perfumed air brought with it the sweet scent of violets and primroses.

Dora—was it Dora? Her old childlike look was gone. The long fair hair was still scattered on the pillow, but the face it shaded had the far-off look of a woman who had suffered. She was so pale as almost to startle me into the belief that she was dead—that the spirit must have fled, whilst only the body remained. Her eyes were closed, and both her hands—long, thin, and white—were laid on John's.

I can never forget John's face. I had known him so many years, but I had never seen that expression there before—such *intense* love, such *passionate* despair. He held her to him, as if he would keep her back from following the beckoning finger of Death. Death! was it death? I sank on my knees. Anne was standing in the room, and I fancied her look confirmed my fears. Had I ever wished her gone, even in my most secret thoughts, I would have done anything to save her then.

Some slight movement in the room seemed to waken her, and she looked up into John's face. I observed also a motion on her lips, but no sound reached me. He partly raised her up, and smoothed the golden-tinted hair from off her forehead, hair which seemed to

twine itself round his fingers as he did so. Another minute, and her eyes had closed again. The doctor crept into the room, and first glancing at her, gently opened the window wide. The last rays of sunshine were just departing, and the sun itself sinking out of sight, pillowed on soft banks of red, purple, and gold. Dora reopened her eyes, and turned them in the direction of the window. Some early-flowering roses had partly climbed in, and a faint smile came on her lips as she pointed to them. John went across and gathered one. *It was a full blossom, with a delicate opening bud.*

She took it from him, and passed her fingers over the tender leaves; then, as he put his arm round her, and her head again sank on his shoulder, she whispered some low words, and the same agonised expression came over his face. Whilst I was still looking, the door was shut, and I was alone.

That night I could not even think of going to bed, although everything in the house seemed quiet, except that every now and then a door would open and shut. I felt surrounded by death. I think harsh thoughts of Dora were swallowed up, and my loving pity for John only remained. Anne I could not manage to see, and John never left his wife's room.

It was just as the first gray tints of morning were becoming visible that I fell into a troubled doze, and was awakened from it by a cry of such terrible anguish that I started up, wondering if I still dreamt. There was a sound of hurrying footsteps, a suppressed murmur, and a ring at the outer gate. I opened the door, and, scarcely able to stand, could not even whisper the question I so wanted but dreaded to know. Was Dora dead?

I need not have asked. I saw the answer in the white scared faces. All was over. And—and—was I getting *mad*, that my first feeling was why I had not asked her to *forgive* me? What had I done that this feeling should haunt me, and at such a time? Was she really gone? Had the spirit, whose influence over my brother I had so dreaded, passed with that coming day into the unknown land from which there was *no* return, to be to us for evermore a thing of *the past?*

Where was John? O, if I might see him, but once look in his face and read forgiveness there! I wandered up and down the passages; but the doors were locked in rooms that had now become sacred to the dead, and no one that I saw went in or came out. Where was the child? Was it dead also?

John's child!

How strangely it sounded! I stole into what had hitherto been considered a spare room; a strange woman was walking up and down with something in her arms. She stood still, and, turning back the covering, showed me a living infant wrapped in the sweet sleep of unconsciousness—unconscious of the loss it had just sustained, unconscious that it was never destined to be folded to a mother's breast or protected by a mother's love. I thought of the rose which had been gathered yesterday, now broken from the stem, and of the *bud which remained.*

I hardly know how the following days passed. I caught glimpses of John, with a face so strangely white as hardly to be recognised, going about like one in a dream, with every now and then such terrible awakenings, when he was

alone and at nights, that it made my heart ache to hear him. I had taken his hand and spoken to him, but I had not ventured to offer any sympathy. Would he have accepted it from me? My poor brother! And but a short year ago we were so happy, so unconscious of the evil days which were coming—coming, too, with such a noiseless tread!

Once more, and I saw Dora for the last time. It was on the day that I put on my deep mourning, such as it became John's sister to wear. The funeral was arranged for the following morning, when all that remained of Dora would be placed in the little Kingsnorth churchyard. Mr. Marchmont had come to The Cedars in order to be present, and he was the only guest expected. Whether John had asked any one else I don't know, nor had he ever again to me mentioned George Marchmont; but I concluded, from what had already passed, that this misguided boy had gone abroad. Surely when he heard the sad news, and recognised the part he had played—the part for which I had suffered—remorse would overtake him.

Perhaps that day my black clothes seemed to give me a right; be that as it may, I went towards Dora's room, and knowing my brother was down-stairs in his study with Mr. Marchmont, I once again turned the key which had been left in the lock, opened the door, and crept in. The blinds were all down, but the windows slightly opened, and a soft light pervaded the apartment. The bed had been partly drawn out from the wall, and Dora was still lying on it.

I hardly realised this as death; except for a certain rapture of repose, she seemed only in a deep sleep. The wan look of suffering which I had last seen her wear had faded, and left her again with a childlike beauty that seemed as if it would defy the finger of decay. Her long lashes rested on cheeks into which a faint bloom seemed to have stolen, and a half smile was on the parted lips. The golden hair was smoothed back, but not concealed. The white drapery which had been thrown over her was turned aside, and displayed the hands folded on the breast, as if in the last act of prayer, and clasped between them were some early hothouse roses. Spring flowers, too, were scattered all about—soft delicate violets and primroses, looking, as she looked, so pure and living, destined, as she was, to crumble and decay.

I should never see her again—never hear her voice. Could it be possible that she seemed so near, and yet was so far away? My brother's wife; but only now in name, and only to be spoken of in hushed whispers, and mourned for, as a thing of the past, in all the coming future.

I dared not linger, but some sudden impulse made me stoop down and put my lips to the cold forehead, so cold that it struck like monumental marble; but I uttered a prayer for forgiveness as I did so—a prayer that if anything she had suffered had been caused by my error, or my mistaken love, it might be blotted out. Then, as I had come in, I went softly out, and locked the door.

The day of the funeral came and went. It was a spring day, varied by alternate bursts of sunshine and shower. I remained up-stairs, and listened for the deep tread that must pass my door. It sounded at last, a heavy measured tramp. She had gone away to be laid in the little Kingsnorth churchyard. I sank on my knees. My brother—my brother! how my heart was aching for him!

The sound of slowly departing wheels announced that I was once again his sister as of old; but, ah, how changed!

I could not bear to be alone; so I went out, down the passage, and into the spare room. *John's child!* I must see John's child, to realise all that had passed. It was lying on the nurse's lap, and, as I stooped down, it opened its eyes—*Dora's eyes*—and I saw in it a miniature representation of my brother's wife. Would he cling to it, and love it as he had loved her, or would the sight of it pain him too much? I had never liked children; but an instinct of pity for this little motherless baby came over me, and I took it in my arms. Its tiny fingers closed on mine, and it rested as profoundly peaceful as if no sorrow could ever touch it. Yes, I felt it then, at once and fully. If John would only let me, I would devote myself to his child; I would expiate by my love and care whatever had been my mistakes in the past; and from that time I hovered over it day and night. I stole in and out of the room, I watched its every move, and listened to its gentle breathing with a jealous care, for was it not to be the new link between John and me?

Mr. Marchmont did not remain after the funeral, and I only saw him for a few minutes, whilst John locked himself into his study and spoke to no one, neither that day nor the next. Anne took some food to his door; but he sent it away almost untouched, and I dreaded what might be the end of such absorbing grief. I could only pray that I might console him, and that he would yet turn to me as of old.

It was nearly a week after the funeral had taken place that John himself sent for me, and trembling with an undefined dread, I obeyed the summons. He was standing by the study window, and turned slowly round as I entered. His deep black contrasted strongly with his pale face and bowed figure, especially with his face, on which suffering had traced deep lines, whilst his hair was quite gray.

'John,' I exclaimed, 'my brother! let me be with you, only let me come to you!' And I clung to him as I spoke.

He stooped and kissed me; but it was a cold unloving embrace, and chilled me as much as a repulse.

'Harriette,' he replied, and his voice had but the echo of its former tone, 'I told you once that if Dora died, *we* could never be the same again. I shall try to forgive you, Harriette, for it was her last wish; but I could not bear to see you, and think that, perhaps, *but for you*, my darling might still be here.'

'O John, that cannot be! It was no act of *mine*.'

'The sufferings she endured at your hands, Harriette, humanly speaking, caused her last illness,—an illness from which, when her trials came, she had not strength to rally. You knew she needed care—did you give it her?'

A remembrance of the cold night, when the dark outline of her figure on the bed had half appealed to my pity, flashed before me, and I made no reply.

'She came to this house a short year ago, prepared to be the sunshine of my old age, and she might have been; but *a shadow, a blight*, fell upon us, and that blight was *you*, Harriette.'

'O John, and I had so loved you!'

'What was your love? It could sacrifice nothing; it had no mercy.'

Had *he* no mercy? Could this hard stern man be my brother?

'John,' I said, 'let the future expiate the past. If I have erred, it has been through a jealous love, exacting on your behalf, but always meaning for the best. You are unjust—'

'This is no time for recriminations, Harriette; I have sent for you to-day to tell you that I have made arrangements for leaving The Cedars.'

'*Leave The Cedars?*'

'Yes.'

I saw an opening to his heart, a link that would bind me to him in the future.

'John,' I said, 'leave your child with me, and I will devote my life to its care and well-being. You cannot take it with you, and if I fail in one act of duty, may I never be forgiven!'

A look of positive *horror* crept over his face.

'Harriette,' he exclaimed, and his voice was shaking with emotion, 'I would sooner trust Dora's child to the merest stranger than to you. Never *think* of it, never *hope* for it; for that is as *utterly* impossible as that I can ever again feel towards you as I once did.'

Was this the ending of what I now found had been so strong a hope within me? Tears choked my speech.

'Wherever I go I take the little Dora with me. God knows that without that new tie to earth I should wish myself sleeping in my grave; but I have promised to live for *her* sake, and I shall try. This house, Harriette, will be at your service, to occupy or not, as you think best; I shall write occasionally, and if ever you need anything, I will endeavour to supply it.'

'O my brother, when all I shall ever need will be your love, when all I have is you!'

'Harriette, if it will be any consolation to you in the days to come, remember I *have* forgiven you, and, as a seal to that forgiveness, once again I take you in my arms and kiss you. As I wish you good-bye, not for the sake of our old love, Harriette, not because we were children at the same mother's knee, but because of my promise to the dead, I say God forgive you, Harriette, as I *do*, and as she *did*.'

I could not answer a word as he put me gently from him, so I remained as if turned to stone. John sank into a chair, and leaning his head on the table, covered his face with his hands.

I heard her name on his lips, a cry of mute anguish for the dead, who would never come at his call again.

I turned slowly, and tottered from the room. I was an older woman by ten years after that interview—ten years compressed into one short half-hour.

CHAPTER X.

I DID not see my brother again, for he went away very early the next morning, taking with him the nurse and child. I wandered into the deserted rooms, where all had lately been so redolent of life, and found them empty. I had not expected that he would leave in this way; I had hoped to see him again, hoped he would relent.

Anne remained behind in charge—Anne, whose instructions were to wait upon and look after me, always supposing I should live at The Cedars. Other arrangements had been made with the same idea, and letters and directions left; but I at once determined not to continue a day longer than I could help under

shelter of a house where my presence had been supposed to have caused so much misery, and where my brother would no longer live with me, preferring to become a solitary wanderer.

Even Anne, who had been with us so many years, seemed changed. She had acted as Dora's constant attendant during her illness, and instead of looking as she used to do, bright and cheerful, I often surprised her sitting in her late mistress's room, with her apron thrown over her head, sobbing as if her heart would break.

When I told her that I should not remain, she begged I would not decide in a hurry, knowing her master wished me to be at The Cedars, and well taken care of; but I had made up my mind. I would accept no favour, but far rather live on my own small income than be dependent. So I packed up my clothes and personal belongings, and wishing good-bye to all the old familiar things, left John's home on a bright summer's day, and took my journey to the North, where I had determined to reside, at all events for the present, not with any friends, for I shrank from question and sympathy, but in a modest little cottage far up in the Cumberland mountains; and it was in this spot that I passed away many years of my life.

Letters in John's handwriting, and bearing different post-marks, came at regular intervals. He generally spoke of himself as being well, and also of little Dora; but he made no mention of returning to England, and expressed no desire to see me, whilst I, on the contrary, growing old without cares or interests, longed to look upon his face once before I died.

This longing at last took such possession of me that I determined to pay a visit to The Cedars, to see Anne, to stand again in the old rooms, and feel that all my past life had not been a dream. It was ten years now since I had left. Ten years out of a life that is journeying steadily downwards make a huge gap; so in the summer-time I began my travels, and on a glorious July day, like as I had done before, I once more left the little Kingsnorth station, and walked across the fields to The Cedars.

It seemed to me that I was going over that time again—going home to John and his wife. The birds were singing, the sun shining, and all Nature was putting on her most attractive colours. As I neared the outside palings by the laurel entrance, I felt afraid to enter; so I crept round under the shelter of trees which had been shrubs ten years ago, but which now clustered thickly over my head. The house looked exactly the same—the jasmine and westeria twined round the portico, and the sweet scent of the magnolias and early summer roses perfumed the air. The soft green lawn looked like a velvet carpet, and the wide branches of the cedars cast their long shadows across it.

Presently I was startled by the sound of a footstep, which passed close by where I was standing. Was I dreaming, or was it Dora herself risen from the grave? The outline of a face I remembered so well; the golden hair hanging over the shoulders; even the white dress and little blue-kid shoes. I held my breath as, singing some soft little air, the apparition went slowly by, and down the walk towards the entrance-gate. Presently the form of an old man appeared behind it, and the fairy figure in white flew to meet him, now clinging to him, now dancing on

NOTE

LADY MAY.

[See the Verses.

LADY MAY. [See the Verses.

in front, now stopping to be folded in his arms, till at last, with both her hands holding his, and her golden head resting lovingly on his arm, the vision of the old man and the girl disappeared through the portico, leaving only the echo of their voices behind.

I held on to the palings. I had not come to see this; I had not expected it. Was it really my brother? Ten years had laid a heavy hand upon him; his hair was white as snow, his figure bent, his step infirm. But Dora—Dora lived again in that child of ten summers; she was the Dora I had first known—the girl who had come between me and all future happiness as my brother's wife, and she was *John's child.*

I had seen his face lit up for the Dora of other days with such intense love, such agonised misgivings, that I thought it could wear no deeper expression. But I saw it again that day, and another light was there, different, perhaps, but softer, holier—the love of a father for the child of a dead wife, the sole remaining link between him and a moss-grown grave.

I never thought of entering into their house, now that I knew who was there. It was enough for me that I had seen them—more than I expected; and I felt that there was once again brightness in the old home, and that *I* was best away. So, as I had come, I went silently back to my little cottage in the Cumberland mountains.

Perhaps some day I shall see John again. Perhaps, if I were *dying*, he would come to me, and I should read the forgiveness I have so longed for written on his face.

LADY MAY!

TENDER light in your eyes,
Lady May!
Soft delight in your sighs,
Lady May!
And dimpled cheeks beaming
Too brightly for *seeming;*
What does it mean,
Lady May?

Ah, that musical treat,
Lady May!
Was e'er music so sweet,
Lady May?
Sweet voices were trilling,
Young pulses were thrilling
To the *music*, I ween,
Lady May!

And that opera-box,
Lady May!
Where *somebody* knocks,
Lady May!
And where somebody came—
'Just for court'sy,' 'twas plain—
What did it mean,
Lady May?

Ah, that whisper so sweet,
Lady May!
When two hands chanced to meet,
Lady May!
And the stage held all eyes,
While with breathless surprise
You woke from—a dream,
Lady May?

How the dimpled cheeks flushed,
Lady May!
Baby-roses new blushed,
Lady May!
From the garden of bliss,
Warmed to life by a kiss,
Strange did it seem,
Lady May?

Under wimple and cloak,
Lady May!
Love has surely awoke,
Lady May!
And he sighs for release,
Passion pleading with peace,
As the leaf with the stream,
Lady May?

Clasp your dream to your breast,
Lady May!
Let it linger and rest,
Lady May!
Loose the shimmering pearls
From those dusk-darkened curls,
And believe you are blest,
Lady May!

RITA.

CHAPTER XXIX.

TIME'S REVENGE.

I WAS to have one more barren triumph, and in a quarter where I had never thought of looking for it.

Though society in general might still write down Mr. and Mrs. Gerard as the happiest of couples, and regard with envy so brilliant a partnership, there was one, besides myself, forced to see nearer, and over whom the unwelcome knowledge was creeping that this fine temple of Hymen, this gay palace of fortune, was little better than a whited tomb.

Jasper's mother, my old enemy, —the time had come for her, witnessing the match she had set her heart upon and done her utmost, both by direct influence and indirect manœuvring, to bring about, to recognise its threatening outcome: nothing less than the gradual overthrow of her son's moral, intellectual, social, and individual prosperity.

My feeling towards her had altered with time. All resentment had died out. Coolly speaking, no one could blame her for the part she had played. Granting that she had been averse to the prospect of having me for a daughter-in-law—a girl with a scraped hundred or two a year for a dowry, and a suspicion of eccentricity, waywardness, or at least laxity in her worship of 'the thing' about her—Mrs. Gerard had a right as a parent, perhaps, to use all fair means to prevent it. Life=strife, it is said, and in war all is fair. Had Jasper never swerved, never had a mind to be blindfolded, to lose the distinction between trifling and earnest, and, knowing Hilda divinely fair, to seek to know no further, *she* could not have done it. The masculine will must have conquered, and the mother have come round in the end. Now I must pity, and only pity, her. Here was a cold and undemonstrative nature, a well-adjusted piece of feminine clockwork, one to whom good appearances and decorum were paramount considerations, disturbed past the possibility of composure by the very forces she had set in motion, harried to death by a ceaseless, painful anxiety, stronger than that second nature of gentility and propriety which bade her conceal all emotion, stronger than the semi-ludicrous, semi-heroical principle of humbug, that leads us to flaunt our signal 'All serene,' in the face of the outer circle, throughout our own depression, disgrace, and despair.

To a lonely woman, such as Mrs. Gerard, the outer circle meant all the world, Jasper only excepted.

Hilda detested her already—and Jasper's wife was a good hater. Old Mrs. Gerard was shrewd and critical; not prudish, but rather particular. The life of flirtations and extreme dissipation she had thought harmless, nay, the right thing, for the high-spirited, much-courted Miss Jarvis, had a very different significance, and was calculated to displease, nay, to shock, her when continued and persisted in by her

son's wife. Mrs. Jasper Gerard's notorious coquetry might be mere thoughtless vanity, but it was bad taste and indecorous, and had given rise to more than one passage of arms between her and her mother-in-law. The latter was a woman who never shrank from speaking the most disagreeable home truths, and words more plain than polite were said to have run high between the two. Hilda's retorts to such remonstrances were obvious: 'If Jasper wished for a wife to bury her in the country, if what he wanted was a housekeeper to look after the stores and visit the poor, he ought never to have married me.' She had quite thrown off the pretty hypocritical deference and assumed sympathy which had won the mother's approval long ago, and from the pointed spite of the younger woman, and the chill formality of the elder, shown in their manner to each other when they met in society, it was easy to see that the breach was a deep one, and not the less irremediable for not being open. On Hilda's part the ill-feeling, which she was obliged to keep pent up and disguised, thus grew more sour and virulent.

'Deliver me from that woman,' she said to me one day vindictively; 'she shall not come near my house oftener than I can help it.'

She gained her point by a regular system of petty provocation, practised against her mother-in-law in a thousand little ways, such as only women, fortunately, ever think of, putting her feminine tact to sinister usage to convey delicate insults, slight ineffable annoyances of a kind that Mrs. Gerard could not brook. So soon she ceased as far as possible to expose herself to such treatment.

But, though Hilda might thus shield herself from domiciliary visits, she could not stop those chilling eyes from keeping a sharp, censorious, detective-like scrutiny over her in society.

Everybody divined the hostility between them, and everybody pitied Hilda, saying expressively, 'What a mother-in-law!'

Old Mrs. Gerard was thoroughly unpopular—like nearly all of her sex who intimidate. (Why is it that we like the man and hate the woman we fear?) Unsympathetic female natures, whatever their high deserts, must forego the sunlight of general affection.

Mrs. Gerard had sterling qualities; a force of principle, an honesty and right-mindedness, which entitled her to no slight admiration. Young people were apt to hold them cheap, imagining that, because everybody professes to be sincere and upright, these virtues may be found for the asking. Those who had learnt their rarity valued them more justly in Mrs. Gerard. She was a noble, though not an ennobling, character. She was capable of devoted acts of self-sacrifice, but the very kindest services she took care to perform so ungraciously as to destroy their charm — like those head-masters who make a point of never presenting a pupil with a prize without at the same time carefully impressing upon him that he does not deserve it.

Her life, too, was narrow, dreary, and shackled. True she had grown to her bonds, approved, liked them, and would have had them laid on all mankind. But she had few active pleasures to set against the keen trouble now haunting her—such distrust of Hilda, roused by the increasing leakage of a hateful insincerity and heartless readiness to trifle with the welfare of others, as filled her with fear and remorse on Jasper's account.

Yet beyond such facts as that Hilda waltzed too much and too indiscriminately, dressed too showily and extravagantly, laid herself out too exclusively for frivolous pleasure and conquests, Mrs. Gerard had no charges to bring against her.

Her fears, for being indefinite, were probably all the more grave and painful. No possibility so dark, no catastrophe so terrible, but an alert imagination will forecast it, and suffer almost as much as though from the certain knowledge that it is pending.

One afternoon—it was in May—I had made up my mind to go and call upon Hilda. The forms of civility had to be kept up between us, or they would in our case have become too conspicuous by their absence. That two idle ladies, old friends like ourselves, should live within a stone's throw of each other, and never visit, would have seemed so strange as to set talkers to account for it, which they would not have failed to do in a wrong way.

It was towards four o'clock. As I approached the house-door I saw on the steps another visitor coming away. The tall athletic figure, reddish hair and beard, were not be mistaken. It was Leopold Meredith.

For a moment I stopped short with surprise. He turned away in the opposite direction, without noticing me, and presently disappeared round the corner of the street. He seemed unusually absorbed in thought, and there was another expression on his countenance, not new, but that came out with a boldness that startled me: the stamp of the ruthless self-confidence, self-everything of a man whose *Ego* goes on its way with no more compunction than a Juggernaut car, to trample on whatever shall fall before it *en route*.

What was he doing here? I had heard no news of him or his wife for months, and lately my hopeful fancy had sometimes pictured them subsiding into German domestic life: Leopold quiescent among his pipes and boon companions; Sophie reaching the perfection of housewifery, with Francis Joseph for a bond of union between them.

I found Hilda alone amid the artistic paraphernalia (for picturesque upholstery is *chic* this season) of her drawing-room. After the first few words there came an awkward pause.

'I did not know the Merediths were in England,' I observed significantly. 'Pray have they been long in London? Do they stay?'

Hilda laughed, a constrained, disagreeable little laugh, but there was a ring of latent exultation in it and in her voice as she replied,

'Ah, of course you must have met him just now as he left the house. Did you speak to him?'

'He did not see me.'

'Odd news from that quarter, Maisie. It is old news to me, but I daresay you have heard nothing. I, for my part, foresaw it all months ago, when we were at Adlerberg.'

'You foresaw what?'

'That he and the German heiress could not dwell together in unity, or dwell together at all, for matter of that, much longer. Well, things have come to a breach at last. That is, he and she have agreed to a kind of—let us call it an amicable separation.'

'A separation?' I repeated.

'Why, yes, that is what it amounts to. No scandal, you know. Incompatibility of temper, and so on. The world is to believe that he has come over to England on business. So he has. But

meanwhile Sophie of her own accord has gone back to her father with her odious little boy, and the quarrel will not be made up again in a hurry.'

'Poor Sophie!' I exclaimed involuntarily. So that pie-crust domestic bliss of hers was broken through.

'Poor Sophie!' mimicked Hilda impatiently; 'what do you mean? Because she brought Leopold the little money that made her worth marrying, was he to submit to let her make the rest of his life intolerable by her temper and whims?'

'I mean,' said I steadily, 'that I am sure she made, and would make, Leopold Meredith an admirable wife, so long as he treated her fairly. Once, even, I thought I saw a chance of their life together settling down into a calm that might last, and I am sorry the chance has fallen to the ground—sorry for her sake, not his.'

'She was a little fool,' said Hilda angrily.

'She was foolishly fond of him, I own; but he seemed to be drifting into a kind of content once, and Sophie would have been satisfied with very, very little.'

Hilda shrugged her shoulders.

'She would worry any husband she had to death with her tongue,' she said, laughing flippantly. 'Leopold has had a happy release. Poor fellow! what he must have gone through nobody knows. However, the termagant with the flaxen hair has packed herself off with her grievances, and her curtain lectures, and her hysterics, and her spoilt child, back to old Von Seckendorf, where she may talk over Leopold's enormities from morning till night, and welcome. Leo has come to enjoy a few months' change and peace in London.'

Advice, most assuredly, is one of those good things it is more blessed to give than to receive. I knew the effect of remonstrance here would be worse than none, and sought in vain for the seasonable word I longed to speak.

'He is to stay in London a few months,' I repeated mechanically, lifting my eyes to her face, and thinking. 'I wonder, Hilda, how much that may mean to you?'

She did not flinch. A life-long habit of feigning perpetually, of learning to hide all spontaneous emotion, because spontaneous emotion may be inconvenient, may make one forget one's own interest, get one into scrapes, or expose one to ridicule, had given her a wonderful, fatal power of self-control. An equivocal look of ill-omen passed over her face; then it was gone, she half smiled, and answered me with an expressive deprecatory little gesture of helplessness and ignorance.

There was a long silence. At last it was broken by Hilda saying carelessly,

'What are you going to do with yourselves this summer and autumn?'

'O, Boregate, as usual,' I replied. 'And you?'

'We are looking out for a place somewhere in that neighbourhood, within reach of Bellairs, you know; if only we can find anything that will do. We may very possibly go down there for two or three months some time in August. I should like it; and we have just heard of something that may, perhaps, suit us exactly. Jasper has gone down to look at it to-day.'

Here we were interrupted by the servant who entered, announcing a visitor, Mrs. Gerard. Hilda's whole demeanour changed on the instant. I was one of the few people with whom she did not care to *act* a part. For her mo-

ther-in-law's benefit she kept a special face and manner, which she could don at a moment's notice. A minute ago she had been depressed, constrained, thoughtful, moody, inactive; now she was up in arms, ready, willing for a fray. She must have the first shot, too.

'Ah,' as she rose and went to meet her, with a sweeping approach and effusive embrace, 'of all unexpected pleasures this is the last I could have looked for to-day. You know you so seldom honour us with a visit, that I have grown to consider it quite an event, worth setting the bells ringing for. Now I wonder to what extraordinary chance I am indebted for this?'

Mrs. Gerard, by a silent gesture, seemed to imply that she declined the combat. Without answering, she inquired if Jasper was at home.

'I expect him every minute,' said Hilda. 'You came of course in order to see him, not me. I am desperately jealous, I must tell you. But what is the matter? Really, you are not looking at all well to-day—so pale and worried.'

'I am tired,' she said shortly.

'Ah, I am certain you attempt too much,' returned Hilda feelingly; 'you overtax your strength with endless charities and church services. Good works are all very fine, but I do protest against your carrying your self-devotion to the point of making yourself ill. Why distress all your friends for the sake of the shoeblacks and street Arabs?'

She kept on conversing in this style for the next ten minutes, when a diversion was created by the simultaneous entrance of two or three callers—gentlemen, all young, all artless, and all loud worshippers of this great goddess of Mayfair, Hilda Gerard.

It was a rare opportunity for unmercifully annoying her mother-in-law. She seized and improved it. Ignoring the latter's very presence, she threw herself entirely into the entertainment of her three admirers, into the game of carrying on three flirtations at a time, and carrying them to the utmost pitch she dared under the circumstances.

Presently, just as I was rising to take leave, her own carriage was announced, on which she dismissed her obedient servants three, but begged me not to go yet.

'Jasper will be sure to come in by and by,' she said to Mrs. Gerard; 'you will like to wait to see him. I am now going to be very rude; but I know you will excuse my running off. I have fifty thousand things to do in my drive this afternoon. I consider you as quite at home here, though you do come so seldom. Maisie will stay and keep you company till Jasper returns.'

And off she went. I moved towards the window, and stood there; waited till Hilda came out, watched her step into her barouche, and drive away—the pride of life personified—with a smile on her face, to the Park.

Then I turned round to Mrs. Gerard, and my heart went out to the sad woman in her dismally neat, black, widow's array, with her pale, worn, anxious countenance, making a strange picture there in the midst of her son's luxurious, piquant, blue-green drawing-room.

I felt so furious with Hilda for her behaviour, that at first I could not trust myself to say anything. Then I made some trifling observation to Mrs. Gerard, who attempted to reply, but broke down in the effort of speaking, and there came a burst of tears instead.

For one so rigidly undemonstrative, both by nature and principle, as Mrs. Gerard, such giving way, with myself of all people there to look on, meant nothing less than despair. The worst was that, though I would willingly have moved heaven and earth to comfort her, it would all have been of no avail. The herbs of consolation will not grow or live in the wilderness through which she was passing.

I spoke at last desperately, the only words I could muster,

'It will only complete Jasper's unhappiness, if you let him discover yours also.'

'And he has too much of his own already, has he not?' she said brokenly, helpless to check the paroxysm of grief now that for once it had got the upper hand of her. 'It kills me to see it!' she continued violently. 'I am afraid too—afraid for him. You don't know his nature; no one but myself does that. He cannot let things go easily.'

'Not?' I repeated, incredulously.

'Ah, that is your mistake; it was mine too,' she continued, in a painful, incoherent manner. 'Perhaps I have not been fair or friendly to you; I see it now. I thought it was for the best—*his* best; and there, I have shipwrecked him.'

She might say, she might think that; but it was Jasper who had shipwrecked himself.

'You know Hilda despises those men in her heart,' I urged. 'She likes them to talk and to dance with by the hour; but it is mere vanity.'

I felt guilty as I spoke; for the words, though literally true, were false, given as balm to soothe her uneasiness; but the proud, hard woman's grief had touched me inexpressibly, and I longed to say something to mitigate it, if only for one moment.

'Such vanity,' she returned, 'is more than enough to ruin her; and she will drag down Jasper with her, if she can.'

'If!' I repeated involuntarily.

I heard his footstep on the stairs at that moment, upon which I just pressed Mrs. Gerard's hand, and left the room silently.

Meeting Jasper at the door, I interchanged formal greetings with him, and passed on. The look of intense self-repression, the iron mask his face now always wore, startled me, as it did each time I saw it, just as though it were a novel, unfamiliar feature.

Such was the odd haphazard that had thrust me into his mother's confidence. She would not love me the better for it, I knew. Reserved people naturally hate those to whom in a weak moment they have betrayed their sacred, secret sorrows of heart. Mrs. Gerard never spoke of hers to me again. We were the merest acquaintances outwardly still when we met. But after that day I needed no special revelation to tell me what desolating trouble was preying on her mind, as, all through the remainder of the season, that which had tormented her as a mere presage began to take a name and a shape.

Meredith, it was true, scrupulously avoided going to their house; but he was constantly meeting them in society. Hilda in her intercourse with him had become an enigma of caution, and his habitual callousness of manner and taciturnity offered very little field for uncharitable comment. Not even gossips ventured to couple his name and Mrs. Gerard's together, so far as to tax them with a flirtation.

Was it all over between them really? Or was it something more

than a morbid fancy, fathered by the revelations of last summer, which made me suspect a covert understanding between them? Methought others, with less ground than myself, though nearer to Hilda, had begun to harbour the thought—or its shadows.

So passed June and July. August came, and Mr. Meredith went to Scotland; for months I heard nothing more of him, and the shadows died away.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE LAST WALK TOGETHER.

SELSDEN COURT, which Mr. and Mrs. Jasper Gerard had taken for the autumn season, was a goodly country house in an objectionable situation. It lay in a hollow; the heavy road by which it was approached was the pet antipathy of neighbouring coachmen, and next to impassable for mud in bad weather. The steep, sharp-twisting, stony hill leading down to the house was, when Selsden's tenants were dull people, put forward as a sufficient excuse in itself for irregularities in calling by all such families as had a tender regard for the feet of their horses or the springs of their carriages. Thus I had always been accustomed to hear it spoken of at Boregate as beyond visiting range, quite out of the world, although the distance was only eight miles. But then hitherto it had been inhabited by a dull old couple, who never gave parties, or invited officers and others to come and shoot over their grounds.

The advent of the Gerards changed everything. Two rich, handsome, distinguished young 'somebodies' could not possibly be overlooked. The neighbours suddenly discovered that Selsden was perfectly accessible—not half so far as they had always imagined; the hill was nothing, and the place charming when you got there.

It was a gloomy place at the best; but there was a certain grand air about it that may have helped to recommend it to Hilda. The house was well built and spacious; and though the rough roads offered no inducement to her to drive her ponies as at Bellairs, it was a good country for riding: and ride she did—every day, and in all weathers. Then if, as she had said, she wished to be near her family, Selsden answered the purpose perfectly, the property stretching away to within a short distance of Sir John Jarvis's park. Only for those who did not ride, Selsden and Boregate were practically as far removed as though eighteen rather than eight miles lay between them.

At Boregate we were established in our old quarters for the autumn. I had gone there resolved not to seek meeting the Gerards, and I never did. My desire to penetrate into the prison-house of their present fortunes seemed to me to have died out, over-satisfied, perhaps; and I tried to close my ears and eyes for a while to them and their good or ill-hap. But it was too late. Occasional meetings were unavoidable; sometimes it would be out driving, sometimes at a party at Bellairs or at another country house; and I appeared to myself to have acquired, where they were concerned, an uncomfortably vivid power of perception and divination, like the sharpness of a Red Indian, to whom a broken flower, a bent twig, footprints unnoticeable to unpractised eyes, tell the tale of the track,

and what has passed along it. The merest trifles would thrust themselves on my observation, and suffice to reveal a whole history, telling me, without my asking, what was passing, or rather what had passed, between them.

More than one endeavour on Jasper's part to put things on a footing, if not of sympathy—that being impossible—of sincerity and good-will, ever met and frustrated by persistent reserve on Hilda's side; by simulation, or rather an affectation of content and unconcern, that scarcely pretended to be more than what it really was—a convenient cloak for the true state of mind—and that brought such advances to a dead-lock. Forbearance was the word now, the one word, now that he realised their absolute estrangement of soul. Looking on, I saw no end, no cure, an eternity of failure and ill. Yet with no open rupture:

> 'Nothing was to see
> But calm and concord; where a speech was due,
> There came the speech—where smiles were wanted too,
> Smiles were as ready.'

But the worst fears Mrs. Gerard's motherly love might suggest, would scarcely reach the harshness of the reality—transcend it, never.

Selsden Court. Once only I went over to call there. My mother was so puzzled at my reluctance to pay the visit, and my repeated excuses for putting it off, that one afternoon, when, for the twentieth time, she proposed the drive, I consented to accompany her.

We found Hilda at home and alone. Till yesterday she had had a friend staying with her, Miss Harvey by name, a girl I had often seen about with her in London, and whom I regarded with an instinctive aversion and mistrust. She was stylish and clever, but palpably intriguing and insincere, and I was rather relieved to find her flown. Jasper, Hilda informed us, had that very afternoon been obliged to go up to fulfil a business engagement in London, but was to return the next day. Selsden, always dull, seemed immeasurably so this autumnal afternoon, in spite of its fine-lady tenant. It was unlike Hilda voluntarily to immure herself in such a melancholy place, a very mausoleum travestied into a country home. It might be my lively imagination, or it might be the damp day; but everything appeared to me to suggest the vault and to smell of decay. For me there were skeletons behind those stately ancestral pictures of the dead, mildew lurked under the resplendent white-and-gold paper, moth and mould in the substantial monumental old furniture. We walked with Hilda through the suite of reception-rooms, into which the sun never shone, opening upon a garden that *would* look sad, despite the care and money bestowed upon it. Cypresses, only, should have grown there. In the midst of this there was Hilda herself, with youth and beauty all but inviolate still; but what sort of content, what possible hope, in her heart? Her look I thought strange, her manner unusual. There was excitement somewhere; she talked by fits, and rather unconnectedly.

My mother for a while continued to expatiate naïvely on the delicious calm and solitude of the place. Calm enough, in all conscience. Something too much of that death-like droop and stillness. Even she began to perceive it was oppressive at last.

'Do you not find it a little, just a little, lonely?' she asked mildly, as we rose to go; 'and with Mr. Gerard away, too.'

'We have not been alone for a single week since we came two months ago,' Hilda replied. 'We have had a regular succession of visitors, and I shall quite enjoy the quiet for a change. Jasper returns to-morrow night, you know.'

She spoke the last words in a tone whose carelessness struck me as so studied, that involuntarily I looked up quickly into her face. Her eyes fell.

Impossible to describe the queer, unaccountable, indefinite foreboding that took hold of me. I did not shake it off until we had left Selsden and its shadows far behind, and reached the top of the hill, where the pure air met us. I drew a long breath of relief.

'They cannot possibly stay many weeks more in so cheerless a place,' said my mother decisively, as we drove on, no longer bound by politeness to praise that roof, now we were not under it.

'I have heard that the shooting is good,' said I vaguely.

'Well, I daresay it may be. But it is surely a dreadful den for a lady.'

'It was Hilda's own choice. She pressed Mr. Gerard to take it. Besides, she rides everywhere.'

'She does indeed,' said my mother significantly, shaking her head and sighing. 'I suppose it is all right; but in my young days the fashions were very different.'

Hilda's fearless horsemanship had years ago been the admiration of all the country side. But old-fashioned people were apt to look disapprovingly upon certain ways of hers they thought too independent, and which I had lately heard discussed in detail at Boregate.

For instance, when it suited her pleasure, and anything prevented Jasper from accompanying her, Mrs. Gerard would often ride out alone, and without the usual escort of a servant.

These solitary excursions had been at first confined to Selsden itself; then extended to Bellairs, her home also, in a sense, and very near. Where was the harm in this? As a child she had been accustomed to scour the paternal acres all day long on her pony; as a young lady to ride freely about the park, at least, without a groom at her horse's heels. Selsden and Bellairs were such close neighbours, with only a stretch of down between. A short canter brought her from one to the other, and there was seldom anybody but an agricultural labourer to see or be shocked. But sometimes she had ridden round by Boregate, once or twice gone as far as Lockhaven. This was a gay, noisy, populous seaport, and to be met riding alone on its outskirts was enough to originate among gossips there the report and belief that this was her constant practice.

Thus, though such masculine independence was reckoned very 'fast' and objectionable, her apparitions, however rare, excited no surprise.

We were in October. The autumnal gales had set in with unusual violence that year, and the season was wet and wild. On the afternoon of our visit to Selsden there had been a lull, which was followed in the night by heavy rain.

Then began one of those utterly reprobate wet days, when all weather-vices, even those usually counted incompatible, meet and run riot—wild wind, soaking torrents of rain dashing in cross directions, thunderstorms hanging about. The atmosphere was thoroughly disturbed. The barometer seemed to have gone mad, and weather prophets were nonplussed.

No one could dream of taking a walk that day. Ethel and Claude decided that after lunch. They established themselves comfortably in the two best armchairs of the sitting-room, and betook themselves respectively to the study of the poems of Algernon Swinburne and William Blake.

Towards four o'clock I suddenly announced an intention of going out. I hated constitutionals, but my perverse longing that day for fresh air and exercise was too strong for me. I said I should walk to Lockhaven and back. Could no one give me an errand to do in the town, 'just for an object'?

The twins pronounced me a lunatic.

'You will ruin everything you have on,' said Ethel.

'And catch bronchitis, and die,' added Claude, 'to a certainty. But whatever you do, mind not to take out my new umbrella.'

I laughed, but was obstinate. Four walls made a prison that day, and iron bars a cage. As go I would, my mother suggested that I might get as far as the Lockhaven station, and try to procure her an evening paper, with the latest particulars of a sensational trial then going on, and in which both she and the twins took the most profound interest.

Half an hour's plodding, in a waterproof suit, down a high-road in the direst state of sludge, cooled my activity wonderfully. It was hard work to make head against the wind and rain that beat in my face. But I fought my way on, and neared Lockhaven at last.

'How desolate Selsden must look to-day!' said I to myself; 'how the gale will howl as it careers round the house! It must be dreary for Hilda. I wonder what she thinks of, sitting there with nothing to do but to listen to this?'

Just as the thought crossed my head, my ear caught the sound of a horse's tramp behind me. Some one was cantering steadily down the heavy road. In a few minutes Hilda herself passed me, on her favourite mare, Ginevra. The blinding rain and my discreet waterproof domino had prevented her from recognising me as she went by. I noticed also that she wore a very thick veil.

'Rather a late ride for her to take, considering the distance from Selsden, and the bad weather. She can hardly get back before dark,' I soliloquised, puzzled.

She had quickly distanced me, down the road, but I saw that she took the same direction as that in which I was bound, turning off to the Lockhaven station outside the town.

Close by were some large stables, well known to such of the country gentry as jobbed their horses, and to Mr. and Mrs. Gerard, doubtless, among the rest.

Half a dozen ostlers and grooms rushed at once to attend Hilda, and receive her orders as she rode up. She dismounted, gave some directions to the men, and, leaving her horse in their charge, walked off quickly to the station, which was about a hundred yards distant.

The down train from London was due in five minutes. Was Jasper coming? Or was it mere restlessness, as with me, that had brought her out in the storm?

When I reached the bookstall on the platform I looked round for her, but she was gone. I did my errand, and then was about to leave the station. But a mastering impulse, not of curiosity, but of nervous dread, moved me to turn back and glance into the waiting-room.

She was there. I shall never forget the spectacle: the close, dingy, miserable, dusky little cell; the slippery, black-horsehair chairs and sofa, thick with the dust of ages; the staring texts printed in large letters, and hanging on the walls; on the table a tract or two and a decanter of stagnant water; and quite alone in the midst of the squalor, Hilda standing pale and expectant, her riding-dress gracefully looped up, her face how handsome still, though, at that moment, it struck me, for the first time, that the world's finger had touched her beauty unkindly.

'Hilda!' I uttered, in amazement, 'you here?'

At the sound of her name she started violently, with the senseless, guilty panic of one who sees latent retribution everywhere, and shrinks from it. It was Hilda, as I had seen her once, face to face, at Adlerberg. But this time she looked unspeakably relieved to see only myself, one from whom she had little or nothing left to hide.

'Yes, yes,' she replied hurriedly, confusedly; 'I—I have come down—to meet Jasper.'

The equinoctial gales raging outside, the rain drenching the station walls and windows, with what an uproar, what glee, they seemed to give the lie direct to her words! I looked up into her face.

'Come down to meet Jasper!' I echoed derisively, and laughed, for I knew as well as she that it was a lie.

The engine whistle sounded.

'At last, at last!' I heard her whisper to herself. The train was five minutes late, perhaps, but she had lived all her life over again in those few moments.

'*It is not Jasper.*' The words, that burst from me in spite of myself, she overheard.

'Go, Maisie, go,' she began excitedly, losing reserve and self-control in the tumult of the moment; 'forget—forgive—I mean put all this out of your head. I have thrown everything overboard for him—for Leopold. He is to meet me here. In a few hours we shall have left England.'

Blight and perdition! 'Fulfilled, fulfilled!' I stammered wildly, trembling from head to foot with a strange agitation nearly as violent and as painful as Hilda's. Words choked me. I turned away. I shrank with a feeling of loathing from the very shadow of Meredith. But, as I crossed the platform, a kind of unpleasant fascination *forced* me to look back. The train had stopped; the passengers had already alighted. There were not more than half a dozen, and, as I saw at one glance, Leopold Meredith was not among them.

This staggered me. I thought of Hilda, overwrought as she was, waiting with consuming impatience for him to join her, and the idea of the shock the discovery must cause her filled me with sudden, infinite pity. I turned back. I was not her friend, and even had I been, she was past a friend's help, but there would have been inhumanity in deserting her then and there. I waited. The next minute, the suspense becoming intolerable, she had left the waiting-room, and we met on the platform.

'He is not here,' I said.

Her look of utter consternation startled and shocked me, even now.

'Impossible, impossible!' she muttered, looking hurriedly about; but so it was. Then—she could not shriek, or wring her hands, or faint, with some half a dozen unsuspicious railway-porters looking on; but she stood like one half-stunned for the moment. I re-

mained by her, hesitating, at a loss what to say or do.

'Don't leave me!' she entreated, in a hoarse whisper; and her hand grasped my arm for support. Instinctively she pulled down her veil, to hide such a look of consuming anxiety as had never been forced into that face before.

Then she took out her watch. Half-past five. The next train was due in about an hour. I could guess from her countenance the thoughts and conjectures flitting through her mind. 'He has been delayed. There has perhaps been an accident.' Yet no; there are cases and crises when delays and accidents may not, must not, occur.

'I only ask you to walk with me a little way into the town—as far as the post-office,' she said presently, in a low tone. 'Don't refuse. You can leave me there, if you like; but I cannot, dare not, go alone!'

I bent my head in silent assent. It seemed as if, in retribution for my old spent rancour, I was sentenced now to stand by and look on at her soul's tragedy to the very end. Not a word passed between us as we walked along. What words were possible? What consolation, what redemption, could an apostle have preached here, and been heard?

I might have parted with her at the door of the post-office; but she was evidently not in a fit state to be left alone, and I followed her inside.

There she asked carelessly, 'Any letters for Miss Harvey, Selsden Court?'

This girl, her friend, accomplice—all was plain at last—had beyond doubt lent her name for the correspondence.

There were no letters, Hilda was told; but a telegram to that address had just arrived, and was on the point of being sent off to Selsden. It should have come that morning, but had been unavoidably delayed, owing to the havoc made by the gale among the telegraph-wires, that had intercepted communication with London for several hours, and thrown everything into confusion.

She had presence of mind to turn away first towards the door, and then she tore open the message. What she read seemed to go through her like a sudden poison. Her countenance changed; she could not breathe; her lips were clenched, and her fingers closed with a tight grip round the paper they crushed. Instantaneously I drew her out into the passage, where we were not overlooked.

'What is it?' I asked; every other feeling merged in the compassion of one human creature for another in the utter despair that I saw before me.

She replied, straining her voice to speak, 'He cannot come. His brother, Lord Meredith, died this morning suddenly.'

How the world's face had changed for Hilda in that one turn of the wheel!

Gone, the vision of a six months' paradise certain,—to be made the path to a more enduring triumph, over the wrung hearts and spoilt lives of others,—or whatever else her sated, jaded ambition may have desired and anticipated. Gone for good. One had stepped in between her and the strange Dead-Sea fruit she coveted: Death, ay, and the world—her god and her lover's. He and she were worldlings first, lovers afterwards. Leopold is Lord Meredith now.

To him that means more than a coronet, large property, large income, and prominent position. All these leave him no longer

free. The compass of selfishness, that pointed to one track yesterday, warns him off it to-day. His thoughts *must* turn to his wife and her boy, his heir. Another step, and he will have put an impassable barrier between himself and them. Shall he not pause to ask if he can repair the wrong already done, and turn back at the eleventh hour, but before it is too late, and he has thrown even shame away?

'He says he will write,' muttered Hilda idiotically—'*write!*'

Ah, she felt he hung back, and felt why. He was hers to command no more. The catastrophe that had fallen must part them at present, if not for ever.

She was beginning to recover from the shock of the blow, to realise the necessity for some kind of action. She seemed to be casting about in her mind what to do; drew her hand over her eyes as if to brush away a mist, and said in her natural voice,

'I must get home.'

'Home!' I exclaimed. The demon was up in me all at once, struggling with pity, and ready to crush it down, as the revolting picture arose again of Hilda and falsehood triumphant.

'I must; I must! O, if it should be too late!' with a sudden awakening of fear in look and tone. 'But there must be time still. I shall save myself.'

'What do you mean?'

'Jasper cannot arrive before eleven,' she continued agitatedly. 'He is not coming to Lockhaven, but by the other line to F—, and will drive over. I shall get back hours before him yet.'

I was mute. 'True to yourself,' thought I, 'and false up to the end.'

She had taken hold of my arm, and now drew me out of the building and up the streets towards the stables, where she had left Ginevra.

'Is it safe to ride?' said I ironically. The wind was rising higher and higher, and thunder rolled in the distance. 'Are you not afraid?'

She laughed at the idea. 'O, Jenny and I have weathered worse storms together than this. Six o'clock. She will bring me to Selsden in two hours, or less.'

'It will be pitch dark very soon.' It was dusk already.

'So much the better. I shall not be recognised. Come on.'

'Do stop and consider,' I urged, as another thunderclap sounded. To me—no Amazon—the ride, under such circumstances, appeared foolhardy in the extreme. 'Could you not remain for the night with some of your friends here, or at Boregate or Bellairs; the gale would be reason enough?'

The idea of her going deliberately to meet Jasper with a lie in her mouth seemed such a piece of villanous effrontery that I thought even she must shrink from it.

She turned to me defiantly, and said, 'Jasper will know everything if he arrives first. Did I care when I rode away? I even wished him to know. So I left a letter—I thought we should have sailed when he read it.'

We were close upon the stables, where several ostlers were hanging about. 'I told them that Mr. Gerard was perhaps coming down by the train, and that I should drive home with him, and send over for Ginevra to-morrow. I shall say he has not come.'

How she could lie! Spirits, prudence, entire self-control, were rapidly returning to her. Like all who are not hampered by conscience, good feeling, or self-respect, she could realise a situation,

make the best of it, and act as was best for her own advantage all in a minute. But there was fear behind, driving her on.

I stood by, scarcely yet quite believing she would go. The grooms who brought out the mare remonstrated civilly. It was not a fit evening for a lady to ride, especially on the rough and broken road to Selsden. She ridiculed their expostulations. In vain they shook their heads at the obstinacy and headstrong daring of the fair woman. Physically brave she had always been, and, with this present danger of self-wrought ruin before her eyes, she might well be insensible to animal terrors.

Moreover, Satan knows what disenchantment her lover's promotion in the social scale, and their thus altered relations, have begun to work on her already.

She mounted lightly, fee'd the attendants, and gave one parting look at me, no longer beseeching, nor contrite, nor pitiable, but bold and defiant. She knew I should never betray her, and had no fear of me. Our old relation to each other was there again. All supplication, all wretchedness, vanished from her face, all compassion and relenting from my mind, as she rode off, cantered down the road, and soon disappeared in the dusk.

'Long live treachery!' I could have shouted in mockery. She will guide Ginevra home with a cool and unerring hand; reach Selsden, where her letter lies unopened—destroy it; and Jasper, when he returns a few hours later, will find his hearth as usual; his wife waiting for him, calm, smiling—caressing, perhaps, the better to disguise the perfidy one would think must burn through each word, look, and act of hers tonight.

'Is there a God in heaven?' my heart cried wildly, drearily. 'Justice—justice! Is it dead?'

(To be continued.)

RIVER RHYMES.

No. IV. A TEMPLE LUNCHEON.

An intercepted Letter.

I.

DEAR ROSE,
I'm sure I sha'n't forget—
That is, I always shall remember—
The very brightest day, my pet,
We had throughout this dull November!
I went last Monday, you must know,
With Dolly, Mrs. S., and Clarry,
To see the Temple flower-show,
And, best of all, to lunch with Harry!

II.

We saw the gardens—'twould be sport
To make the Benchers play lawn-tennis—
And chambers in a dingy court
Where Fanny Bolton nursed Pendennis:
The rooms where Goldsmith lived and died,
The sycamore where Johnson prated;
The house where Pip did once reside,
The Fountain where sweet Ruth Pinch waited!

III.

We met with two of Harry's chums,
In Garden Court we longed to tarry;
We gazed upon chrysanthemums,
And had a glimpse of Serjeant Parry!
And mingling sweetly one perceives—
Mid laughter light and girlish gabble—
The sighing of the autumn leaves,
And singing of the Fountain's babble!

IV.

We grasped a massive balustrade—
The date, they said, was Sixteen Thirty—
The way was dark, and I'm afraid
We found the staircase rather dirty.
When at the chambers we arrive,
Old recollections not a few come,
We half expect to see young Clive,
George Warrington, or Colonel Newcome.

V.

Ah, what a spot, my dearest Rose,
To muse upon this queer old Den is!
To catalogue its curios
I'm sure unable quite my pen is!

But from its panes we gaze upon
The misty midday sun a-quiver;
The red-sailed barges drifting on,
The sparkle of the dear old River!

VI.

And then my thoughts drift back again
To those bright happy days at Hurley—
A pleasure strongly dashed with pain—
(O, Harry's locks are brown and curly!)
Ah me! it was a pleasant scene,
If only— Yes, but p'r'aps one couldn't!
Alas, the things that might have been!
But as they were not, p'r'aps they shouldn't!

VII.

But, Rose, the luncheon! It was grand—
The oak you know, my love, was sported—
And all the speeches, understand,
Were much too good to be reported.
There's Clarry and big Charlie Clough—
It is a case! I think they'll marry—
I wonder who is good enough
For handsome, gray-eyed, laughing Harry?

VIII.

It soon grew dark, but I could see
That clearly no one did desire light;
Miss Dolly and young Freddy B.
Were spooning by the fitful firelight.
We stayed till late, for Mrs. S.
The most enduring chaperone is.
And Harry sang! I must confess
His voice the richest baritone is.

IX.

Ah, how the moments quickly flit
In song and talk and playful banter!
The motto on the sundial writ
Is *Pereunt et imputantur.*
I'm rather sad! Ah, what's the use?
I know you'll think I'm very silly;
Although I am a little goose,
I always am, yours truly, MILLY.

J. ASHBY-STERRY.

SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE CAT.

The Cat is one of the most famous establishments for the retail sale of gin to be found in or about London. Fifteen years ago, speaking figuratively, the Cat, as compared with the edifice that now bears that sign, was no more than a mere blind kitten, that might or might not escape the fatal pail: a dingy little public-house in what then was a by-street, with a bar no more capacious than an ordinary pantry, and with a mite of a bar-parlour behind, in which the landlord and landlady took their meals, with the door open and exposed to the public gaze because of their inability to afford the expense of a barmaid. Fifteen years ago only! Now attached to the Cat is a handsome coach-house and stabling. Within may be found a fashionable mail-phaeton and a dog-cart, the property of the present proprietor, Mr. Chowler. Mr. Chowler knows what it is to sit behind a good horse. In his stables he has three of those animals, not to mention the pony on which Master Chowler takes his airings of a morning. It is well known in the neighbourhood, which is particularly squalid and dirty, that a rankling thorn in Mr. Chowler's pride is the fried-fish shop next to the coach-house. In the old times Chowler himself kept that shop, and Mrs. C., whose common outdoor wear now is sealskins and gold chains, dutifully assisted her husband in making money by attending to the frying-pan. There is bad blood between Mr. Chowler and the present fishmonger, who brutally makes jokes of the statement of the former that the health of his family, and of Mrs. C. in particular, suffers from the malodorous effluvium which pervades the neighbourhood when his cookery is at full blast. He declares that Chowler objects simply because he does not like to be so constantly reminded of his humble origin; and it is even said that in the malevolence of his, the fried-fish monger's, heart he is in the habit, when the silver-plated horses are harnessed to the fashionable mail-phaeton, and Mr. and Mrs. C., arrayed in all their glory, are about to step into that vehicle, of stirring up his fire and setting the fat in the pan frizzling and fuming, so that his neighbour's offended nostrils may receive the full benefit of it. But Mr. Chowler has his compensations. No man stands higher in the esteem of the 'trade.' At the Licensed Victuallers' banquet, the chairman, when he comes to speak of princely patrons and of those who have deservedly attained high and proud positions in the liquor interest, invariably looks unmistakably in Mr. Chowler's direction, and that gentleman as invariably glances up towards the ladies' gallery, where, in a conspicuous seat, may be seen Mrs. Chowler, twinkling like a jeweller's show-case, and a buzz of admiration is audible in the hall. Mr. Chowler, however, is not a man to presume on these tokens of 'the trade's' appreciation of his eminence. It is his delight to speak of the Cat as his 'little shop,' and he will facetiously allude to the handsome bays and the mail-phaeton as his 'donkey barrow.' Responding to his health-drinking, he admits that he is just able to

live, and that he even hopes shortly, if his affairs continue to prosper, to add an onion or two to his customary dinner of bread-and-cheese. There is, of course, immense laughter at this, because it is very well known that it was but the other day when he flatly declined to accept the sum of 17,500*l.* for the good-will of the Cat, the lease of which has yet five-and-forty years to run.

When I heard of this I could not believe that it was true, and an opportunity occurring, I spoke of the matter to an individual who is in a position to know all about it. He assured me it was quite correct. The sum mentioned had been offered and declined; 'and no wonder,' said my informant, 'when he is "doing" about eight hundred a month.'

'Am I to understand from that, that his monthly dealings in such a poverty-stricken locality as that in which the Cat is situated amount to the enormous sum you mention?' I asked, with some surprise.

'Precisely.'

'But possibly Mr. Chowler does a wholesale trade as well as a retail—sends out gallons of spirits and wines by the dozen to private customers?'

'Nothing of the kind,' responded my friend; 'Chowler's is strictly a bar-trade, and nearly the whole of it is done by means of measures of which a half-pint is the largest. I will venture to say that, out of every pound taken over the counter at the Cat, fifteen shillings is received in separate sums under sixpence. You should look in there one Saturday night, and then you would at once understand how it is done.'

On the face of it this was simple advice, but by no means so easy to adopt as at first sight might appear. To merely 'look in' at the crowded bar of a public-house, or even to go the length of ordering a glass of something there, and lingering over it to the utmost limits of the barmaid's patience, would be doing the subject scant justice. To scout all thoughts of consequences, and 'go in' for a long evening in company with such an unlovely assemblage as one might, after what my friend had told me, not unnaturally expect to meet there, was an undertaking to be avoided if possible. To be sure it was no particular business of mine, and I might think no more of the matter. But I could not banish it from my mind. All day long, and with an occasional waking up in the night, I was haunted by the arithmetical problem: given the price of half a quartern of gin at twopence halfpenny, how many customers, each one swallowing, say, two half-quarterns, would Mr. Chowler require to serve in the course of a month, Sundays included, before he amassed the sum of eight hundred pounds? I believe that I could have worked the sum quite easily had it been put as gills or half-gills of water or oil or vinegar; but there was something in the fact of its being gin that I was required to account for, and its being meted in 'quartern' and 'half-quartern' measures, that somehow involved the whole business in such frightful confusion, that in self-defence I was driven to the conclusion that the shortest way out of the difficulty would be to take the evidence of my eyesight in the best way I could. Good fortune assisted me materially in this respect. Without stating exactly where Mr. Chowler and his Cat reside, I may say that it is on the Surrey side of the river Thames, and that it is not a hundred miles from the New Cut, and something under a hundred and

twenty from that notorious marketing place of the poor known as Lambeth Marsh. Within a convenient distance of Mr. Chowler's 'little gold-mine,' as his friends affectionately speak of it, is a tall warehouse or factory, the upper windows of which command an uninterrupted view of the gin-palace and its surroundings; the former, with its glare and glitter, its mahogany panels, its tablets of dazzling green and gold, its flashing silvered glass, and its prodigality of gorgeous lamps, looking as though it could never have been deliberately designed to stand there, and to have arrived at its present magnificent completeness, by gradual process, but rather as though some mischievous modern Aladdin had summoned that most wicked of all wicked genii, the demon Alcohol, to do his bidding, and lo, next morning, in the midst of the homes of squalor, and the foul courts and alleys where little children pine and starve for wholesome food and pure air, and where rags and vice and penury in its ugliest shapes prevail unchecked and uncared for, there appeared a beautiful palace, the owner of which was a Cat, velvety, sleek, and seemingly without a claw to scratch with, who purred a welcome to all who by hook or by crook could furnish their pocket with money, to be passed over the counter in exchange for the waters of delight, red, yellow, and white, of which there was such an abundant store in the palace cellars.

It was but barely dusk when I sat down at my post of observation, and in the long narrow market street below busy preparations were making for the Saturday-night throng that would be sure by and by to arrive. Judging from the nature of the wares that were being put in order for sale, there did not appear much chance of Mr. Chowler taking his average sum of twenty pounds or so that evening; everything was so mean and paltry, and so evidently selected to meet the requirements of a number of persons whose existence was a scramble from hand to mouth, and who never were able to make both ends meet without a desperate stretching of the material. There were the butchers' shops, the proprietors of which were in a mighty hurry to set their flaring gas-jets blazing, so as to lend an artificial complexion to the skinny yellow carcasses and joints of mutton and the pale pink beef; the greengrocer, the staple of whose stock was potatoes, mounds and tons of them at so many pounds for a penny that any one not in the secret could but wonder how the shopkeeper contrived to do business at such a ruinous rate. My high perch at the window, however, provided me with a key to the mystery. It enabled me to see over a screen at the back of these cheap potato-shops, where in each case immense quantities of the much-esteemed vegetable were being 'roused' round and round in vats of water, the power being horse-power, and the villanous object to cause the potatoes to imbibe so much of the aqueous element that they became heavy as stones. There were the fish-stalls, heaped with the cheapest and commonest of fish; and the barrows of the costermongers, piled with Covent Garden refuse and all manner of green stuff, on which the magic art of the 'renovator' had been skilfully exercised to restore it from the yellow of decay to its pristine lively hue. Besides these hucksters who traded in eatables, there were dozens and scores of others who dealt in all manner of second-hand flinders and frippery for female adornment, and old-clothes merchants who laid

out their store of coats, waistcoats, and trousers on a sheet spread in the muddy roadway; and traffickers in second-hand boots and shoes, who made a display of highlows and bluchers on the edge of the pavement. Poverty everywhere, even to the toys. It would be difficult, perhaps, to get together a marketable quantity of children's second-hand toys, but those who had them to sell in this region of grim money-grubbing came as close to it as possible by offering, at a prodigious reduction from prime cost, broken and damaged goods from the wholesale warehouses in Houndsditch: noseless Punches, clockwork mice whose interior mechanism had become deranged, dolls of high connections of the best wax, and wearing real hair, but who were in some way the victims of maiming and contusion. But it was unmistakable that the juvenile population of the locality were not without proper pride. Other children's 'leavings,' however dainty, were not to their taste. It was not as though the children of poverty were not specially catered for by those whose bread depends on studying their likes and dislikes. There, as I can plainly make out, in a half-dozen places are their proper toymen with an ample stock of 'hard-working cobblers' at a halfpenny each, the spliced limbs of that industrious mechanic being governed by a string, which on being tugged sets the cobbler hawling at his waxends and an old boot, until his rolling eyes seem as though they would start out of his head. There are a drunken washerwoman and Snip the tailor on the same principle, and they appear to go off, considering the hardness of the times, at a tolerably brisk rate.

It was not, however, until the darkness of night, about half-past six, fairly set in, and the street below was lit through its entire length with flame jets from gas and oil and naphtha, that the crowd began to make its appearance. From my observatory I could see through the whole breadth of the plate-glass windows of the Cat, and scarcely a yard of the ample space before the bar provided by five compartments was hidden from me. There had been not much trade doing at that establishment as yet; but the decks were cleared for action, and the crew of muscular barmen were evidently prepared for action. There were four of them, strong and hearty fellows in their shirt-sleeves, which were rolled back above their elbows, and with white aprons, but with neither shirt-collar nor neckerchief, the object evidently being to avoid any superfluous incumbrance that might impede free action when the time for displaying it arrived. Mr. Chowler was present, but he wore his glossy hat and his black coat, and his frilled shirt with the emerald studs, and lounged negligently at the door of the private bar, smoking a cigar in a manner admirably adapted for the display of the two large diamond rings with which his short and chubby little finger was adorned. The queen was in her counting-house counting out the money. In other words, Mrs. Chowler, wearing the sleeves of her black-satin gown short enough to fairly reveal her heavy bullion bracelets, was busy in the parlour with a cash-box and a tray, setting out countless heaps of change for sovereigns and half-sovereigns handily counted and all ready.

Seven—half-past seven came, and at present the four stalwart barmen had had such an easy time of it, that I began to think that I had unfortunately hit on an exceptionally slack night. But my

alarms were soon dissipated. At half-past seven I counted sixteen people drinking at the bars; at a quarter to eight there were thirty-three; at a quarter past eight there were so many, and the five doors were so constantly opening and shutting for the egress and ingress of customers, that I found it impossible to keep count, and gave up the task as hopeless. There was no rush as yet. However elaborate might be the carving and gilding and cumbrous ornamentation on the liquor-vending side of the bar, the most rigid economy as regards space was observed on the drinking side of it. In each of its five compartments—which included the great principal one, capable of affording standing-room for perhaps a hundred persons—everything was as naked and bare as a warehouse. Not a chair, not a form, to sit on; not a table or so much as an upturned tub to rest a glass or pot on. But as there was by no means room enough at the long length of bar to accommodate the groups of friendly drinkers who, as the night advanced, poured in thicker and faster, there was nothing for them to do but to stand in the midst of the restless mob in clusters, sore pressed for elbow-room as they turned their measure of gin into the glasses, or raised the shining quart-pot out of which they were amicably swigging.

I never should have believed, had I not witnessed it, that a craving for such terribly expensive stimulants as gin, rum, and whisky, but especially for the first-named spirit, could have seized with a grip so inexorable on folks who could so ill afford to indulge it. It was as though gin was the one necessity of life, and all other things were luxuries, in the purchase of which it became every one to observe the strictest economy, so that the main requirement might not suffer. I could see women haggling for miserable scraps of meat at the butcher's shop, and pondering on the price asked per pound for it with puckered lips and anxious head-shaking and furtive counting of money, who, when the shabby scrag was secured, hurried straight to the Cat, and, hobnobbing together as friends and neighbours, swallow each their couple of 'half-quarterns,' and with it the price of a four-pound loaf, before the clock in the bar had told off ten minutes. I saw a man, a poor tattered wretch, endeavouring to bargain with a second-hand shoe-vendor for a pair of boots something better than his own, which hung about his feet mere wrecks of rusty leather. But they couldn't agree on a price. It wasn't much they differed over, for, my window being open, I distinctly heard the boot-vendor call after the man, 'Another tuppence and your old uns, and they're yourn!' Perhaps if one of the five mahogany jaws of the Cat had not stood so conveniently ajar at that moment, he of the old boots might have come to terms, and been able for the ensuing month to have gone about dry shod. The Cat caught him, however, and, seemingly, with no more free-will than a mouse in the mouth of the real grimalkin, he approached the bar, and there stuck—for I kept my eye on him—for two hours at least, during which time he must have had his twopenny-halfpenny measure replenished six times. It is mightily hard, with such evidence before one, to believe that gin is all delusion, a trap and a snare, mere emptiness and vexation of spirit. Anyhow, it is undoubtedly a temptation—I speak from that night's experience—against which not two

in every ten of a promiscuous mob of the hard-working and poverty-pinched are proof. There was a pawnbroker's shop a little way down the street, which to the very door, and even out on the pavement, was crowded with poor women who had come to redeem the clothes necessary for Sunday wear, and which had been temporarily mortgaged for food, perhaps, during the week. Almost invariably, and as though they were compelled by the law to do it, these women carried their ransomed bundles into the Cat, and wagged their heads as they discoursed the hardness of the times, and drank each other 'better luck' at the cost of a precious sixpence. The miserable-looking old toyseller who dealt in hard-working cobblers appeared to carry to the Cat the first halfpence he took. Indeed it must have been so; for having swallowed his gin—not more than a pen'orth, I should think, by the small dimensions of the glass—instead of returning to his business, he went elbowing his way through the crowd that was drinking, and having, after much solicitude, disposed of two cobblers, he treated himself to a second pen'orth of gin on the strength of his good fortune.

By ten o'clock the bar was crammed full as it would hold, many indeed, after vainly endeavouring to wriggle their way through the press and reach the bar, giving up the task as hopeless, and pushing their way back into the street again. As for the four muscular barmen, nimble as harlequins though they were, and dexterous as jugglers in drawing liquor and giving change, they must have been men of immense physical capacity to have withstood the heavy and increasing strain that was put on them. Mr. Chowler's equanimity, however, was not disturbed. He took no active part in the business beyond appearing at intervals of about a quarter of an hour to sweep out the tills and carry away the booty in a bag. My friend was quite right. A 'look in' at the Cat on Saturday night had made it plain to me why Mr. Chowler refrained from selling his little gold-mine at the price offered. Why should he dispose of it at all, when it was his own Tom Tiddler's ground, secured to him by lease for five-and-forty years, with nothing for him to do but dig up gold and silver, exerting himself so little over the process that he could wear his hat and smoke a choice havannah the while? Who shall say him nay?

Those who so persistently fight the up-hill battle in hope of obtaining, if not the total abolition, at least some abatement, of this gigantic evil, will have little or nothing to thank the Legislature for should success attend their efforts. Indeed it may with truth be said that there never was a time when the publican received more tender consideration at the hands of those by virtue of whose authority he wields his immense privileges. Take even the question of adulteration. Under the recent law to suppress this system of robbery, the vendor of malt and other intoxicating liquors is liable to heavy penalty, should he for the increase of his profit endeavour to pass off the sophisticated article for the real. It is a positive fact that there is not in London one publican in twenty but in some form or another, and in some shape or another, breaks this law; but he does so with impunity. There is never a week passes but there appears in the newspapers cases of fraudulent milk-sellers being summoned and heavily fined for the reckless use of water; cheesemongers are haled

up before the magistrate for playing dishonest tricks with butter; grocers are made to suffer for mingling chicory with coffee; but in the list of evildoers when does the publican's name appear? As a dealer-out of short measure, and as a tradesman who has forfeited his pots and glasses—its consequence—perhaps as often as any one; but the weight- and measure-examiners have nothing to do with the Excise or the Adulteration Act.

It is not always the best way to bring the greatest question to the narrowest possible issue. As, for instance, the main charge against the publican, or rather against the system he is permitted by law to trade under, is that it encourages drunkenness. The gin- or beer-seller meets the accusation with a bold denial, and urges that he of all men may be relied on to do what he can to discourage the vice in question, inasmuch as it is he who suffers from it. 'Put it on no higher ground than self-interest,' says the publican, 'and it is manifest that I must be as anxious to put down bestial intoxication as the most stanch teetotaler of them all. A man drunk on my premises during business hours is not only an intolerable nuisance to my well-behaved customers, he is likewise a hindrance to me and my servants. He affects my till. People who look in at a public-house, and see drunken men at the bar brawling and reeling, go away, and seek a quieter house. Therefore it is that no publican who knows his business will serve a man who is drunk, or encourage him to remain on his premises a minute longer than can be avoided.'

It should be distinctly understood, however, that by the term 'drunk' the publican means boisterously, offensively so. That worthy tradesman has no objection, taking 'drunk and incapable' as being represented by one hundred, for the drinker to approach, say, ninety; or he may go even a few degrees beyond, provided he has sense and strength enough remaining to steady himself sufficiently to be able to carry his 'load' safely off the premises. As every one who has any knowledge of the subject is aware, it is not the soft-headed individual, who grows 'merry' on a pint of sixpenny, and helplessly tipsy on two pints, who brings the greatest amount of misery on his home and his wife and children. The bane of domestic existence is 'the soaker'—the man who so habitually makes a beast of himself at a public-house bar, that the liquor he swallows for a considerable time has no other than a benumbing effect on his nervous system, enabling him to imbibe in the course of a few hours the alcoholic produce of possibly a fourth of his week's earnings, and that without making himself objectionable—from a publican's point of view, that is to say. Next to the total abstainer—the individual who ranks lowest in the publican's esteem—is he who cannot drink much without getting drunk; while the customer he most rejoices in is he who can swallow and pay for as much as would make any ordinary decent half-dozen men incapable, and then take his peaceable departure, swearing eternal friendship for the landlord and all his family.

'PERFECT LOVE IS SIMPLE FAITH.'

CHAPTER I.

THE three magistrates had sat uninterruptedly far into the autumn afternoon, and had now retired to consider their decision. It was a distressing case, and occurring in Singlebridge, which is a mere handful of a town, provoked intense interest among the inhabitants. Everybody knew the parties concerned. Silas Westbrook, the reluctant prosecutor, was senior partner in an impressively solid firm which had flourished in the borough for generations. He enjoyed a reputation for strict probity and broad benevolence which was singularly merited. His son Augustus (also in the firm), a witness for the prosecution, was held in much esteem by certain of the younger sort in Singlebridge, who sympathised with his amiable wildnesses; and if certain of the older sort looked askance at these, why, that was only natural. About Mr. Blanchard, another witness for the prosecution, little was known to the inquiring gossips. He had been resident with the Westbrooks for about eight months, during which period he had sat alongside Gus in the office in business hours, and had been a good deal about with him at other times. They got on amazingly well together, people observed, but despite all his efforts—and some of these were marked enough—suave Mr. Blanchard failed to similarly captivate Gus's pretty sister Fanny. As became her father's daughter, she treated the West Indian connection of her father's firm with unfaltering graciousness. But her sweetest moods, her tenderest looks and gentlest tones, were not for him. The magician at whose bidding *they* so gladly came was Blanchard's instinctive foe. From the moment Harold White, confidential clerk to the firm, and a potential partner therein, met and simply shook hands with the West Indian, they hated each other with a hatred that owed its sustenance on the one side to contempt, and on the other to malice and all uncharitableness. To-day will behold the triumph or discomfiture of Blanchard. In the police-court of Singlebridge, in the presence of a crowd of people, the majority of whom are personally known to him, Harold White stands accused, on the united testimony of the Westbrooks, father and son, of embezzlement.

To the profound chagrin of the magistrates' clerk, who, cordially disliking Blanchard, wishes well to the accused, the latter conducts his own defence. As the official observes, talking in an undertone across the table to the reporters, 'Such a course is quixotic, not to say idiotic. It is an ugly charge, look at it as you will, and ought to have been met with more guns than White carries. What does he know about crossing a witness? A lawyer up to his work would have made mincemeat of that fellow Blanchard; and as for that young cub Westbrook—'

'Silence in the court!'

Of the four actors in the little drama old Mr. Westbrook betrays the most agitation as the opening

of a door at the back of the court heralds the return of the magistrates to their seats on the bench. Westbrook junior is flushed and palpably uneasy. Blanchard, who is seated by the side of the prosecuting solicitor, leans his head on his hand, and peers out balefully at the prisoner, who, with head erect and firmly-set mouth, awaits the declaration of his fate. The silence is oppressive when, in a voice full of feeling, the chairman turns to the accused and says:

'Harold White, I, who have known you for so many years, need not say that the long examination which my brother-magistrates and myself have this day conducted to the very best of our ability has been to all of us fraught with considerable pain. The charge which has been preferred against you is one the gravity of which, considering the nature of your relations with the prosecutor, it would be difficult to overrate. In you he reposed implicit confidence. For a lengthened period he regarded you—as he has shown in his evidence—as one whom it would have been an insult and an outrage to suspect. And we are bound to admit, in your behalf, that nothing has transpired in the course of this hearing which reflects in the least on your conduct during the period to which I refer. We have given due consideration to this fact in your favour, and have come to the conclusion, actuated by motives which we earnestly hope you will live to appreciate in a proper spirit, to dismiss this case. You may go.'

'But my character,' exclaimed White, in a voice husky with emotion; 'who is to clear that of taint?'

'Yourself,' solemnly answered the chairman. 'Call the next case.'

Dazed, trembling under the influence of warring passions, he left the dock and passed out of the court into the sunlit street. Whither should he direct his feet? As he slowly and mechanically, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, with bowed head and leaden gait, stole along in the direction of the river-side, he felt a touch on his arm. He paused.

It was one of Mr. Westbrook's clerks. The lad's mouth was tremulous with sympathy.

'Mr. Westbrook has sent me with this note, Mr. White. Is there any answer?'

'Yes,' he replied, tearing the paper into atoms, 'there is. Mr. Westbrook wishes to see me. Tell him that we shall not meet again until he is prepared to stand up in that court-house, and pray to be allowed to proclaim my innocence in tones as loud as those which he used to-day in declaring my guilt.'

The lad left him. The September sun was sinking redly behind a familiar belt of woods which fringed the further banks of the river as he continued his moody walk. He had held on for miles, heedless of the direction he took, and now he awoke from his fit of passionate bitterness to find himself on a spot that had often been hallowed by the presence of the girl he loved. What did *she* think of him?

'Harold!'

'Fanny!'

In those two words all was expressed. In that fierce embrace doubt was slain.

'O Harold, I have followed you for hours, fearing to speak, you looked so pale and changed!'

'I am changed. They have not sent me to prison, Fan, but the prison-taint is on me. Why don't you shrink from the moral leper, as the rest of them have done?'

'Because'—and it seemed to him as though her voice had never thrilled with such sweetness before—'I know you.'

'And you believe—'

'That all will be righted yet. I can wait, dear—if you will let me. You never were more precious to me than you are at this moment.'

'Miss Westbrook— Come, Fanny, this is no place for you.'

Harold and she had not heard the footsteps. It was Blanchard and her brother who had approached unnoticed.

'And no place for you either,' said White to Blanchard.

'Faugh,' replied that worthy, 'I have no words to waste on such as you, sir. I am here to perform a duty.'

'Scoundrel!' Harold began, at the same time raising his hand. She touched him, and he was still.

'Sir,' said she, confronting Blanchard, 'I am mistress of my own actions. If I choose to accompany my brother, it is—because I choose. Harold, good-bye! Come what may, my faith will not falter, my love never change.'

The last four words were murmured. As she shaped them she reached forward and kissed him before her brother, whose surprise at her defiant attitude was unspeakable.

They parted, and went their several ways.

CHAPTER II.

The charge against Harold White of embezzlement, and the result of it, produced a wonder that lasted much longer than the proverbial nine days. His departure, the day after the hearing, no one knew whither, had had the effect of increasing the number and sympathy of his friends. It was generally admitted that his defence had been weak—incomprehensibly weak. But who knew? he might have had his own invincible reasons for not making it stronger. Why had the brother of his affianced (for she was his affianced in all but an open formal declaration of the fact) broken with him so suddenly? Until Blanchard appeared on the scene they were inseparable. Depend upon it, the West Indian was at the bottom of it. In this fashion the gossips of Singlebridge discussed the events which had led to Harold White's downfall and departure.

By and by the house of Westbrook, both in its business and its family relations, furnished fresh food for the *gobemouches*. From the day of the trial Augustus had, to quote the phrase of one of his congenial comrades, 'gone the pace no end, and the governor had come down upon him precious hot' in consequence. His absences from the office became more frequent, his presence at resorts of pleasure more noticed. It was observed by one or two of the shrewder chroniclers of local tittle-tattle, that whereas Blanchard's attention to business never flagged, he was not seldom the companion of Augustus during that erratic young gentleman's expeditions in pursuit of enjoyment. On these occasions he invariably managed, by either accident or design, to pose as the protector, not to say the sorrowing adviser, of the reckless youth. How it came about nobody precisely knew; but twice when the thick utterance and flushed visage of Fanny's brother told their unmistakable tale, she had been constrained to solicit the good offices of Blanchard, in order to conceal the youth's condition from the knowledge of her father. She was not aware

that already he knew too much, and was himself striving to keep her in ignorance.

Three months had elapsed, and not a word had been heard of or from Harold White; unless, the female gossips suggested, he had written to Miss Westbrook, which, considering the circumstances which preceded his departure, he was hardly likely to have done. For once, however, they were out in their calculations. He had written her a letter in which these words occurred:

'If I thought, darling, that you would be happier to be rid of me for good and all, our bond should be dissolved. It is your love for and simple faith in me that sweetens my life, and keeps me steadfast in my determination to undo the miserable wrong from which I suffer. They shall right me yet.

'I have borrowed for the present another name—my mother's before her marriage; but the people with whom I am know that I am Harold White, and are acquainted with my history. I must try, dear, to rub on without the consolation which your letters would bestow. It is better that we should seem to have parted for ever. In the good time we shall meet—and then!'

It puzzled well-informed Singlebridge to hear Fanny Westbrook's cheerful words, to note her placid brow and bright manner. She never could have thought much of *that* Harold White, you know, or she would have manifested some regret at his misfortunes.

Blanchard, too, was mystified by her. What did it portend? Had she resigned all hopes of being restored to the lover whom he had so effectually helped to disgrace and banish? Was the course clear at last? He would see. His impetuous love for the sunny-haired Saxon-eyed girl, a love which sprang into existence the moment they met, had grown mightily since the going of White. He would put an end to this uncertainty. He could face his fate.

'An interview with me?' replied Fanny to his blandly proffered request; 'certainly, Mr. Blanchard.' Her tone was provokingly even. 'And if you please let it take place now. Pray be seated.'

If she had only been embarrassed!

'Miss Westbrook, I—I—fear that the impression which I made upon you the day of that unfortunate *rencontre* by the riverside was not favourable. I—'

'Pray proceed, sir,' she remarked, in icy tones.

'Well, then—allow me—you cannot surely have remained firm in the resolution you then expressed—to cleave to—'

'Mr. Blanchard, I will assist you. You apparently wish to say that I must have ceased to love Harold White? Is that so?'

'Miss Westbrook — Fanny — pardon me; I do. He is all unworthy of you. O, if you did but know the depth of my love for you—'

'Stop, Mr. Blanchard,' said she, rising from her chair, and moving slowly towards the door. 'Let us understand each other. Whether or not Harold White holds the place in my heart which he once did concerns me, and me only. The honour you have done me, Mr. Blanchard—call it by what tender name you please—I despise. Mr. Blanchard, I know you!'

'Stop, Miss Westbrook!' he exclaimed, making one step forward, and barring her way to the door, 'and hearken to me. You have thrown the gage. Very well, I accept it. It was *I* who drove Harold White from Single-

bridge. Ah, you can be impressed, I see. It is I who can *compel* your consent to my demands. Now, Miss Westbrook, *know me!*'

Her face was very white as she swept proudly past the West Indian; but it was not the whiteness of fear. They measured swords with their eyes — how clear and searching hers were! — and parted.

Next day Fanny Westbrook was missing from Singlebridge.

CHAPTER III.

For twelve months Silas Westbrook has been daughterless. Fanny was sought for far and near, but without avail. Appeals in the second column of the *Times* remained unanswered. The investigations of private-inquiry offices bore no fruit. And this was not the old gentleman's only trouble. Augustus had, to quote the idiomatic expression of that congenial companion already referred to, 'gone clean to the bad.' Of all his former chums, Blanchard was the sole possessor of a knowledge of the young scapegrace's whereabouts. As for the West Indian, he seemed to have entirely relinquished all intention of returning to Jamaica. Twelve months had effected almost as great a change in his appearance as in that of Silas Westbrook. He looked grimmer. It was said, too, that he was grimmer, especially in the hold which he kept on the principal of the firm.

However, we must for the present leave Singlebridge, and make our way to the Theatre Royal, Easthampton. The house is crowded by the admirers of the leading lady, whose benefit-night it is.

Old Fussyton, the stage-door-keeper, is at this moment in a state of mind bordering on despair. He dare not for the life of him leave his post; and he has just learnt that a stranger has succeeded in reaching the stage under the convoy of an audacious super. If that should come to the knowledge of Mr. Somerset Beauchamp, the manager, he (Fussyton) will to a certainty be dismissed on the spot.

'Take a note to Miss Harebell, sir? Could not do it. It's against orders, sir.'

The speaker is the call-boy. His tempter is Mr. Blanchard.

'Very well, sir, I'll risk it. If you are a old friend, I suppose it will be all right.'

Induced to commit a breach of discipline by the bestowal of a rather potent bribe, the call-boy disappears behind a pile of scenery, and is presently heard in altercation with Miss Harebell's dresser.

'What do you want? Miss Harebell is not "a beginner." She is not on until the second scene.'

'I know that, Mrs. Cummins. I want to speak to you. Open the door.'

Blanchard heard no more. A whispered conversation between the leading lady's dresser and the call-boy was immediately succeeded by the reappearance of that precocious youth, who said,

'Miss Harebell will meet you after the performance at her hotel, the George. She has apartments there. All you have to do is to send in your name. And now, sir, do clear out of this. How you got in, I don't know. If Mr. Bowshang was to stag you, wouldn't there be a shine neither!'

Escaping from the theatre with no other punishment for his temerity in having surreptitiously effected an entrance than a parting

objurgation from the irate door-keeper, Blanchard dived down a narrow street that led to the harbour of Easthampton, and was speedily lost to view.

Meantime his note had produced a startling effect on Miss Harebell. It ran thus:

'At last I find you. In Miss Harebell I have recognised Fanny Westbrook. At the peril of those nearest and dearest to you, see me to-night. I am desperate.'

'Cummins,' gasped she, 'lock that door. You did it for the best to get rid of him. It is always convenient to decline receiving a visitor at one's hotel; but I will see him. Finish my hair, and then find Mr. Beauchamp. I would speak with him before I go on.'

Blanchard had again curiously under-valued the strength of his lovely opponent. As she went about the completion of her stage-toilet, it seemed as though his advent had given her new life. Her step was firmer, her glance higher. She wore an air of triumph.

She saw the manager, and exchanged with him a few whispered words. He grasped her hand warmly, by way of emphasising his chivalric intentions in her cause, and observed, in a paternal manner that would have sounded half touching, half comic,

'You may depend upon Somerset Beauchamp, my dear. I say you may depend upon him. Don't allow this affair to flurry you. Show yourself letter-perfect in your part, and go through it like another Sarah Siddons—I know you can, if you choose—and *then* I shall know that you are not flurried. The house is crammed. About that other — consider it done. I say, consider that Somerset Beauchamp has carried it to a successful termination. I shall be all there; trust me for stage-managing a *denoomong*. Now then, my dear, pull yourself together.'

Since the day, more than twelve months previously, that Miss Westbrook had merged her identity in that of the now talented actress, Miss Harebell, Fanny had played many parts both off and on the stage. On this particular night she excelled herself. The applause of her crowds of admirers was what would have been termed in stage-parlance 'terrific.' Such was the electric force of her acting, it carried all before it. Was she playing up defiantly to Blanchard? Perhaps.

On the conclusion of the play, she, laden with bouquets, retired to her dressing-room, and in a few minutes had resumed, with the aid of attentive Mrs. Cummins, the attire of ordinary life.

'Cummins,' she said, addressing that most faithful of servitors, 'I will not leave to-night by the stage-door; I wish to pass through to the front of the house. Do, like an obliging creature, borrow me the fireman's key.'

In the space of a very few minutes Miss 'Harebell' was proceeding unnoticed, save by a group of her youthful idolaters who surrounded the pit-door, under the convoy of Mr. Beauchamp, to her apartments at the George.

Before ascending the staircase which led to her rooms she informed the maid-servant that probably a gentleman would call upon her. If he did, she was to show him up, after having privately informed Mr. Beauchamp, who would wait for the news in the bar-parlour, of her visitor's arrival.

Mr. B., whose face beamed with complacent delight, nodded his

approval of this arrangement. Observed Fanny to him,

'Now, Mr. Beauchamp, I shall leave you to your devices'—here she indulged in the tiniest ripple of laughter—'your devices, mind.'

'Very well, my dear, they shall be ready if wanted.'

'And he—'

'Everything is ready, Miss Harebell, and everybody. Let that suffice ye.'

Seated in her snug little room, Fanny dreamily awaited the coming of her ancient persecutor. She had not to wait long.

'Mr. Blanchard, 'm,' announced the maid-servant, and thereupon ushered that gentleman in.

Miss Westbrook rose, and acknowledged his elaborate bow with a silence that was full of scornful eloquence. She then resumed her seat.

'Miss Westbrook, can you divine why I am here?'

'Yes.'

'O, you can? You are frank. After all, why should you not be? We can spare each other the recital of a long preface of dull retrospection. After a long and painful search I have found you—no matter how.'

'I know how,' she calmly interposed.

'Ah!' he exclaimed, 'perhaps you would not mind enlightening me.' His tones were sneering. Her perfect equanimity put him about.

'Not at all. You got the information from my brother.'

'Even so. And—your brother? Has he informed you also that he is just as completely in my power as was another person of our acquaintance more than a year since? Did he tell you that there is that in this bundle of papers which would give him penal servitude, if I chose to put the law in operation? Did he—'

'No, Mr. Blanchard, he did not.' A tear had stolen down her cheek at the mention of Harold's name; but now that she confronted the West Indian, her eyes blazed defiance upon him. 'He did not. Remove your mask. I can read the rascal underneath it. So, then, my hand bestowed on you is to be the price of your silence concerning my brother's crime, if crime it be. But you have shown your claws too soon, sir; see that they are not clipped.'

'And who is to clip them?'

'I!' exclaimed a voice that came from behind the chair near which Blanchard stood, while at the same time his arms were seized in a grip of iron and wrenched violently back. 'I—Harold White! Fan, take possession of those papers.'

'So you think to trap me, do you?' growled Blanchard, actually foaming with rage; 'but you are mistaken.'

'Not a bit of it,' observed obliging Mr. Beauchamp, at that moment entering by the door on the landing. Coolly turning the key and placing it in his pocket, the manager of the Easthampton Theatre continued: 'Now look here, Mr. Blanchard, I have stage-managed too many little things of this kind not to know what's required to strengthen the situation. I have two of my fellows handy on the stairs. My property-man is on the other side of those folding-doors. My friend here and myself reckon for something, to say nothing of Mrs. Harold White—'

'Mrs. Harold White!' gasped Blanchard.

'Yes, Mr. Blanchard,' releasing him and approaching her, 'my wife. She always believed in my perfect innocence of the charge you helped to fasten on me, and when poor miserable Gus confessed

PERFECT LOVE IS SIMPLE FAITH.

[See the Story.

the part which he had played in the conspiracy, we got married.'

'Confessed—conspiracy!' sneeringly exclaimed Blanchard; 'where are your proofs?'

'Here!' replied Harold, pointing to the papers; 'and here they remain until—'

'Until what?'

'Until the father of my dear wife has perused them line by line, and the magistrates of Singlebridge have made my innocence as public as a year since they proclaimed my guilt.'

'Then I may go,' said Blanchard, after a pause; and taking for granted the consent of his temporary custodians, he stepped towards the door, which was under the janitorship of Mr. Beauchamp. That gentleman gracefully waved him back.

'You go on one condition, sir—pardon me—and it is this. That you leave for Jamaica by a certain steamer which leaves this port to-morrow. I have to-night bespoken your berth. Pardon me—if you decline, take the consequences, one of which will be the temporary occupation by yourself of a neat and commodious apartment within the precincts of Easthampton gaol.'

'Open the door.' Not another word did he utter, but taking his hat and looking straight before him, he left the hotel and proceeded—not unattended—in the direction of the Jamaica boat.

It was a pleasant hour or so which Mr. and Mrs. Harold White and their friend Beauchamp spent together that night. It was a more than pleasant meeting that took place a few days after in Singlebridge. Silas Westbrook's happiness was unspeakable. There was a streak of sorrow in it, though, when he thought of his absent son, and prayed that the lad *had* turned over a new leaf at the other end of the world. W.

NETTING BLACK DUCKS AT CAPE GRIZ-NEZ.

By 'Wildfowler.'

It was during my short summer stay at Boulogne, some years ago, that I became practically acquainted with the mode of netting black ducks as practised by the French coastmen, and it happened in the following wise:

A young native sportsman, with whom I had been sporting for two or three weeks, came one afternoon to meet me at a *café*; but, to my surprise, he had with him a common-looking man clad in a blue blouse, whom he forthwith introduced to me as a very well-known sporting character on the coast. This fellow was short in stature, broad in the shoulders, very swarthy in complexion, and looked 'up to every move' (which it turned out he was, so that his looks did not belie his reputation). We entered into conversation at once, and I must say I was very highly entertained; not only by his inexhaustible fund of 'wrinkles,' but also by the quaint way in which he explained and illustrated them to me. I gathered from him that he made his living by sea-fishing from the shore with nets and hooks, by shooting sea-fowl and wild-fowl during their passage along the coast, and by hooking seagulls and divers for the sake of their down and flesh.

I felt interested in the manner in which he carried on his several callings; and as he stated that, near his home at Cape Griz-Nez, there was any amount of shore shooting to be had (as nobody shot there), and I always have had a fondness for that sport, I arranged with him and my friend for an expedition there on the morrow, with the understanding that he would accompany us as guide and game-bag bearer.

'With pleasure,' he said (of course I had offered him a remuneration); 'but, with your leave, gentlemen, I must first set my nets with the tide, for black ducks.'

'What!' I exclaimed (rather incredulously, I must say); 'do you mean to say that you net black ducks at sea?'

'Yes,' he said; 'I always catch some every Thursday for Friday's market at Boulogne. It is fasting-day then, don't you see, sir, and the *macreuses* are such fearful eating, that the Church allows the faithful to eat them. I don't envy them their treat,' the fellow added, with a ludicrous grimace; 'but, then, you see it is for their sins, and in expiation thereof, I suppose, that they have to put up with it.'

I daresay he was right there, although I have heard it said in several quarters that black ducks properly prepared and cooked make a very nice dish. This only shows that 'tastes differ;' for I tried my hand at a couple of them once, and I had enough of it at the very first mouthful.

Well, I asked the man when he intended setting his net for the birds.

'This very night,' he said.

'But at what time?' I inquired.

'O, about three A.M.,' he went on. 'The tide will be low then.'

'I should like to see you setting it,' I mused.

'Well, come home now with me, then,' he suggested; and we agreed to do so, with this difference, that we preferred to drive there instead of, as he intended doing, walking the whole distance, some ten miles at least, if not twelve.

Well, an hour and a half's drive brought us to the village at Cape Griz-Nez, where we found every house already in darkness. These French country folks 'turn in' as early as their own fowls, and get up ditto as a rule. However, we managed to stable our steed in a cow-house at the back of our man's abode on the cliffs, and as we had brought plenty of provisions we were soon very comfortable. The man's wife had got up, and cooked us a hare and an omelette. We uncorked a couple of bottles of old Bordeaux, and made a very substantial meal. This was a good foundation for the night's work in store for us. At twelve o'clock we spread our rugs before the hearth, where a good wood fire was kept up, and we made ourselves as snug as circumstances would admit. The coastman had insisted at first on our taking his own bed, and had he been a bachelor we would not have scrupled in accepting his offer; but as he was a married man, we did not fancy at all turning his wife out of her own bed, and accordingly we declined. Of course we were all in the same room on the ground floor, this only room constituting the cottage in fact, as the rest of the freehold was made up of a garden (about the size of a billiard-table, and wherein grew three consumptive carrots and a cabbage in the last stage of heart-disease), a cow-shed (unused), and a goat-house, with a pretty good milker therein confined, and a loft where the man kept all his netting gear.

I went to sleep very soon, and also very soon after I became aware that somebody was on the move in the room. It was the man. He, barefooted and in his shirt, went to the door, opened it, and gazed out.

'It will be a fine day,' quoth he; 'and it is almost time to prepare ourselves.'

'All right,' we said; 'as soon as you like.'

And we jumped up. The man left the door open, dressed himself, lighted the fire, and our coffee was soon under weigh.

Meanwhile Pierre fetched a small ladder from the yard, propped it up against the wall, pulled open trap-door above-head, and went into the loft, from whence he brought down a large and fine net, together with a narrow one, and several dozens of wooden stakes, each about a yard high, and fastened together by a bit of cord.

'That is all the apparatus needed,' said he, with a grin; 'and I daresay we shall have a fair catch, as the weather is mild and the sea very smooth.'

We then despatched our meal and wended our way to the shore, and a very precipitous descent we found it to be. The shore consists of a seemingly uninterrupted extent of sands on the right. On the left were rocks piled up very high above each other, and also extending far out to sea.

We gave these high rocks a wide berth, and about a hundred yards from the last lot our man proceeded to drive his stakes at intervals of four or five yards, enclosing a pretty large parallelogram of flat rough ground, covered with mussels and other shell-fish. He then fixed his net to the tops of the stakes, so that when rigged

on them the said net was about a couple of feet off the bottom, and of course parallel to it.

Then, to make matters still more safe, he placed seawards a long and narrow net, standing upwards and forming a sort of semicircle round the flat net.

'In this way,' he remarked, 'if any of the birds should be washed off my flat net by the receding tide, they will be caught or retained in the standing net. My rivals neglect to do that, and they accordingly must lose many of their birds; for I frequently find half a dozen birds or so at the foot of the up-net, besides fish too, which have been delayed within its half-circle and got caught.'

'But,' I said, 'suppose any one should come in your absence and take your nets or your birds?'

'Ah,' he rejoined, 'I should like to catch them at it; that is all.'

And he grinned a rather ferocious grin, and significantly tapped the butt-end of his gun.

'I am *un bon enfant*,' he went on; 'but I stand no nonsense which interferes with my living.'

And I daresay he would have taken care of that. By the time both nets were set it was broad daylight, and we entered at once into our shore-shooting trip. The man's dog, a poodle, was with us, and the man narrated he would not lose a single bird, let it fall wherever it liked at sea. This was comforting news, for, as a rule, when sea-fowl shooting, many birds are lost when the dogs used are not quite first-rate for that sort of sport.

Of the fun we enjoyed it is unnecessary to speak here. We bagged about a dozen birds, and when the tide had risen sufficiently high we retraced our footsteps, in order to see how the nets would work.

We chose a part of the cliff just in front of the apparatus, and having ensconced ourselves out of sight in a hole in the *falaise*, the melodrama of duck-catching took place before our very eyes. It was rather entertaining at first to watch the advancing squadrons of black customers, and their peculiar behaviour. The sea in its influx had already covered the flat net with perhaps two or three feet of water, and of course the *macreuses* came with the stream, diving on their way, and evidently greatly relishing the sundry delicacies with which the bottom of the sea was naturally covered. Nearer and nearer came the hosts to the fatal net, and it was positively with 'bated breath' that I saw the leaders of the flock rushing in to their fate.

'You see that first one there on the left,' said our man, with great glee (and we looked at the bird); 'well, you mark my words. He is just over the side of the flat net, and the next time he goes down will be his last, for he will never come up again!'

Sure enough presently up went the black duck's tail, down went his head, and it was like a dream. He was gone evidently; the fatal meshes had fast secured him.

Next to him came four others, all jolly, lively, and business-looking. At their very first dive only two returned, and these two at the next attempt were also secured and drowned. And thus it went on, nearly twenty birds being caught in the same manner.

I cannot say that in the end I was pleased. The whole affair seemed to me to be but little short of 'planned and deliberate murder,' and, being totally devoid of anything like sport, I failed to enjoy it.

Not so our man, however, for he rubbed his hands with delight whenever an unfortunate duck

had his score settled. To him it was a matter of £ *s. d.*, and the question of sport or no sport, I daresay, never entered his head.

Meanwhile the tide still rose, until in fact it came to within forty yards of the cliff, when it stopped, and then began to recede.

We were just on the eve of taking our departure, the surviving black ducks having gone away on our left towards the rocks, when we spied a small black object being tossed by the waves, about a hundred and fifty yards from the shore.

'That is one of the ducks,' quoth the man, without hesitation; and he instantly sprang from the cliff on to the sands, followed by his dog.

'*Va chercher!*' exclaimed he, in French, turning to the poodle, and jerking his arm seawards in the direction of the duck.

And the dog at once ran in, and then, when the water got deep enough, he took to swimming vigorously, frequently turning his head towards his master, as he could not see the object he was sent to fetch. The man kept on waving his hand 'right' or 'left' until the dog 'caught sight,' when he at once went for it with redoubled speed and wonderful eagerness, bringing the duck ashore in a canter, and *sitting before his master when delivering the bird into his hands.*

That was the best bit of fun of the whole thing.

Nevertheless the incident suggested forcibly to one's mind, not only the possibility, but the great probability, that not a small percentage of the netted birds were thus lost to the netters through the tide washing some of them off the meshes of the nets, and carrying them away, when they would be lost unless a watch were constantly kept until the tide was low enough to admit of the 'catch' being secured. If, however, a watch were systematically kept, very few of the birds would be lost, because the birds' bodies when released instantly rise to the surface, and are easily distinguishable.

Howbeit, on the day of which I am speaking, no further watch was kept, for we departed to our breakfasts with the keenest appetites we had experienced for some time.

At twelve o'clock the tide was low enough for wading to the net, and our man went in and secured his catch and his nets and stakes. He had eighteen birds altogether, and subsequently we learnt from him that he sold them at ten sous a piece (fivepence), thereby realising nine francs or a little over seven shillings. It would, therefore, require a pretty large catch of black ducks every day for a man to make his fortune at that game.

I do not know if Pierre is still 'trying it on,' for I have not been at Cape Griz-Nez for some years, and I am afraid the trick would hardly pay him now; for, have not sundry borings been begun at the Cape for the Channel Tunnel? and if so, have not many navvies taken up their abodes in the village? This being the case, farewell to black ducks at that favoured spot of theirs; the navvies are pretty sure, with their old army muskets, to be at them every morning and every evening, and *that* is not very enticing for the birds to remain there. Netting black ducks at Cape Griz-Nez must therefore be pretty nearly 'a thing of the past,' and my account thereof will perhaps prove entertaining to those sporting readers who are fond of hearing of a queer trick or two in connection with over-reaching the cunning fowl of the sea.

UNEARNED LUCK:

A True Story.

PUCK, somewhere in the *Midsummer's Night's Dream*, speaks of 'unearned luck.' I think I can a plain unvarnished tale unfold to exemplify its meaning. The scene is laid in a well-known town, sung of long ago by the late Albert Smith in these words:

'Beautiful Boulogne, I laud thee in song;
Friend to the stranger who has done something wrong:
Walks on thy ramparts, a beautiful view;
Billiards and beer in the Rue de l'Ecu.'

Passing through Boulogne to Paris, bound on a holiday, many, many years ago, I stopped for a day or so with no particular object. Like the gentleman rider who rode a waiting race, and stopped at the starting-post when the flag fell, I thought I might as well wait there as any other place. While killing time I met an old friend, Knatchbull, who proposed a game at billiards. He had arrived only a few days previous to me, and was undecided whether to stay or go elsewhere. So we repaired to the rooms in rear of the Café Vermont, to knock the balls about at the costly rate of 1 franc 50 centimes the hour, with contingent bets of *petits verres* on the result.

While thus engaged in frantic attempts to cut the cloth (neither could play worth a red cent) there entered a third person, whom I shall call Captain Gaussen, and Knatchbull formally introduced us. Gaussen made more 'points' in his conversation, which was extremely light and airy, than we by scoring, and our brilliant tournament over, he said to me,

'Your friend has promised to come to my house this evening for a little music; if not better engaged shall be happy to see you too.'

I answered with thanks, very happy, &c. So our meeting stood adjourned.

'Who is he?' I inquired of Knatchbull, whom I knew intimately.

'Can't say; Bellairs, who came over with me, introduced us. Then he asked me to come up this evening, as he said, "for a little music."'

'We shall scarcely be an acquisition,' I observed; 'I have no voice, and little knowledge of music; and as for you—'

'I have only one song I know.'

'Which you invariably sing out of tune, if you do not manage to forget the words.'

Knatchbull said Captain Gaussen promised that Quintrail would be there; he therefore inferred we were invited as audience, not as performers; for which *rôle* we were confessedly better suited.

Quintrail, as everybody knew was an eminent composer of the day, and report said he was as remarkable for his wit and humour as for his musical talents. I was glad at the opportunity of seeing him. So after a dinner at Baines' (as the English tourist in those ante-School-board days invariably called the Hôtel des Bains), a siesta, and a cheroot, Knatchbull and I started for our little-known host.

Passing under the walls of the Haute Ville, noting the cannon-balls deftly imbedded therein by

native masons, though ascribed by guide-books to the cannon of Lord Nelson, we crossed the Route de Calais up the Rue de Macquetra, past the convent by the road leading to the Vallée du Denacre. Descending the hill, we halted at a modern villa, built, so far as the uncertain light would allow to judge, *à l'Anglaise.* This proved to be the Hôtel Gaussen, our destination. Quintrail and two other men had already arrived, and the musical genius was hard at it. Gaussen said he was in great force that night. He sat at the piano without being pressed, all affectation absent, and rattled off some of his popular works, and others not then published. He enlivened the intervals with racy anecdote and witty flashes. Altogether he was excellent company, and an hour in his society was most agreeably spent. Refreshments consisted of wine, cognac, eau de seltz, and those narcotic atrocities called French cigars—vegetable compilations, which surpass in villany the native havannah of our Whitechapel. A rubber of whist was then proposed, in which Knatchbull, Quintrail, one of the guests, and myself took hands. Talleyrand is credited with having said to a young man who confessed his dislike to cards, 'If you do not play whist, a miserable old age awaits you.' If this be true, generally, without the usual percentage of exceptions allowed as discount off every rule, I fear I shall have a rough time of it in the sere and yellow. Not that I dislike cards. I simply hate them. Skill and play in whist I can fully appreciate, but in play cannot bring my mind to a focus to remember what cards are out—whether my partner has led the odd trump, or if my remaining spade is the thirteenth of that suit. Again, I resent being bullied for remissness. 'Why did you not lead diamonds?' 'You should have trumped the club.' 'Had you returned my lead we should have been out,' and so on. All this recrimination means, in my ears, that I have not only lost my own money, but performed a species of petty larceny to the prejudice of my partner, through misfortune, fault, or more probably ignorance.

However, that night I sat down against my will to make up the table, or save the dummy. The play was mild (quite stiff enough for me!)—half-franc points, and perhaps a franc or so upon the rubber. Captain Gaussen during the game acted the part of Ganymede, going round the table periodically with fluids to exorcise the demon thirst. I particularly noticed the way he dispensed brandy-and-soda was not based on homœopathic principles.

A brace of rubbers, perhaps, were decided, and thoughts of seeking my lodging were rife within me, when I became aware by extraneous noises that reinforcements to our party were arriving. Men now dropped in by twos and threes, until our small room got crowded. This fact was very plain. Their motive for coming so late was not quite so apparent.

The accretion we received to our strength was, in a social point of view, not a gain. The company was composed of Messrs. Tagg, Ragg, and Bobtail. The Honourable Mr. Deuceace was one. Captain Rook, who, being of a retiring disposition, yet by no means shy, had recently left H.M.'s service; Lieutenant Hawk, who, owing to a paragraph in the Queen's Regulations, can never get promotion; and young Cannon Fitz-Fluke, famed for carrying chalk in his waistcoat-pocket, and for calling the marker by his Christian name. A choice lot all round.

I do not know if Boulogne is at present blessed with such select spirits. In the days I write of, it could muster a gang of men which, for disreputability, could not well be matched. Men turned out of clubs; cashiered or dismissed the services; expelled from public schools; rusticated at the Universities; pariahs of society, living on their wits; seldom blundering, often plundering, preying on the public, and, when possible, on each other.

Parenthetically I may recite a financial scheme propounded and executed by the Hon. Y. Z., first of H.M.'s ——s, secondly in the —th Regiment, then of Lane's Hotel, and subsequently of Northumberland-court, Strand; afterwards of Whitecross-street, and, after easy stages, of the Rue des Religieuses Anglaises à Boulogne. He bestowed the charm of his society on that pleasant seaport for some months, supporting himself by honest industry, which took the form of playing *carambolage* with French captains in the garrison—a precarious livelihood at best. As a rule, they know something about the game, and winning from them cannot be reduced to a moral certainty. They have little to lose, and make a fierce fight for it. Notwithstanding, Y. Z. used to lighten their *solde* by superior skill. He was a brilliant player, and billiards proved a small income to him.

One day he received a windfall of a ten-pound note from friends in England. One would have thought such a sum would have lasted some time to one of his enforced economic habits. Not so. 'Much wants more' is an old and true saying. Had he flourished in the days of limited companies, he would have turned out a very Napoleon of finance. Fancy his great mind employed on a bogus scheme or bubble speculation—say an Emma Tramway or Lisbon Ozone Mine! If he with ten pounds, capital all told, doubled it before he went to bed, what could he not have done with 100,000*l.* paid up, and a further call upon the shares? He cut the note in half; took one to one money-changer, the other half to another. Told each the same tale —how he received a half note by that morning's post, and the other was promised on acknowledgment of receipt. A day or so must necessarily elapse; but as he wanted money, he should be glad of the amount. What story more plausible? Each *agent de change* gave him money in full for it. Verily he did not wrap his talent in a napkin. His ten pound that day made another ten pound! Some days went by, and excuses of all sorts made for the delay. At length the money-changers met, and compared notes—half notes, in fact. Result was arrest and trial of the Hon. Y. Z.; sentence, imprisonment; for what term I forget, but know that powerful interest was brought to bear upon the Emperor himself to commute it. He investigated the circumstances, and positively refused to interfere.

And all this for a miserable ten-pound note! But to resume.

My friend and I were on the point of leaving when *supper was announced.* It was served in the next room, with a *menu* varied and *recherché*—*dinde-truffée, pâté de Périgord, galantine en aspic, mayonnaise,* champagne, wines still, red, and white. What was the *raison d'être* for this collation? Knatchbull and I looked at each other as if to ask, 'Who is to pay for this, and how?' We were not long in ignorance.

Supper over, to which full justice was done by this hungry crew,

an adjournment to the card-room was moved and carried. All was ready for our reception—tables set, chairs placed round, extra wax-lights burning, and fresh packs of cards lying waiting to be opened. Several games were proposed—loo, blind Hookey, *lansquenet*, and others, the names of which I have forgotten. Finally it was carried in favour of *vingt-et-un*, and down the party sat—all told, except Quintrail, who had vanished. I have often wondered what induced me to sit down in such company. Was it the love of cards? If I hate a game *imo pectore* it is *vingt-et-un*. In a scientific point of view, it ranks not higher than beggar-my-neighbour. It was not the hope of gain. That I considered impossible, having reckoned up the company immediately on arrival. Fact is I was young—very young—at the time (twenty years ago), and fancy now I had not the moral courage to say, 'I shall *not* play.' Was I afraid of being taken for a muff? Anyway, retreat was difficult. I felt certain I should not be allowed to go until relieved of what I had about me. Fortunately I had left my money at the bureau of the hotel, and had not more than four pounds about me. That I vowed I would not exceed under any consideration. So the game started; the conditions were laid down, and the minimum and maximum points fixed at five francs and twenty. This arrangement did not please the Hon. Mr. Deuceace, who called it 'very mild.' I, who had never played before in earnest, thought it tropical. I calculated about six rounds would clear me out; and although four pounds for supper is beyond my ordinary expenditure, it would be my ransom, and I should be well out of the suburban Hades at that price.

The dealer started two from my right, and had a short life. A 'natural' put him out in a jiffy. My neighbour then worked the coach with a similar fate. He was given 'out' second round, and great was the surprise thereat.

I had several tempting offers to sell my deal, but flatly refused. I would have no truck or barter with them. My purpose, which I kept steadily before me, was to lose my four pounds and go.

I dealt, as usual, the stake-card all round. Tagg, Ragg, & Co., Gaussen,—all, except Knatchbull and the two guests present first at whist, put on the maximum, 'to give the dealer,' as they said, 'a chance.'

On looking at my card it was an ace. In a wild moment I cried out, 'Double!' but could not have known the liability I incurred in so doing. On being 'content,' only Knatchbull and another had overdrawn; the rest I had to 'see.'

My second card was an ace. Turning them, I said,

'I go on both.'

The third card I turned proved again an ace, and a loud buzz of sensation went round the room.

'I go on all three.'

The buzz at once ceased. A death-like silence prevailed, as calmly and quietly I turned my cards.

The first was a king; the second was a nine; the third was a knave.

The company rose like one man, and looked with withering scorn at Captain Gaussen, who seemed to quiver and tremble before them as if he had been my confederate in a swindle. Muttered imprecations were used freely; then succeeded a chatter and a jabbering which fairly out-babelled Babel. As for me I was stupefied for the moment, and failed to realise my position. On pulling myself to-

gether I found I was winner of fourteen times the sum originally staked by each, and the question of settling with me was being proceeded with. Some paid me in full, others in part, and I O Us given for the balance, redeemable next day at the Café Vermont, which for settling was constituted the Corner or Tattersall's of the place. They left their host abruptly, without even wishing him good-night, tacitly accusing him of standing in with me, and turning them into pigeons when they came invited to act as rooks.

It is but just to say all came next day to take up their paper. This prompt payment was a homage and tribute to one whom no doubt they considered a bright and shining light in their profession. To show in what esteem they held me, I may mention they never even asked me to give them their revenge.

One word on mine host. Another on my 'unearned luck.'

Some years elapsed before I again visited Boulogne. There I met Jawbanks, who was cock of the walk, the gossip, and English guide to the place. Who knew Boulogne ten years ago and knew not Jawbanks? The grand inquisitor of morals, a self-constituted dictator, the autocrat of English society, Jawbanks did his duty. Always on guard on the pier to scrutinise each cargo of passengers landing. Those in transit he made a mental note of, those who stayed he mercilessly buttonholed, and cross-examined with minuteness of detail of most exhaustive kind. He was the encyclopædia of the place, and had the birth, parentage, age, income (when any), relations, antecedents, and motives for visiting Boulogne of every Englishman then there. Woe be to those who, landing without clean hands, ignored or disputed Jawbanks' sway. He made it hot for him, you bet. This dreadful man frightened many intending residents from the place. Matters became so serious that owners of furnished houses proposed signing a round robin requesting him to seek fresh woods and pastures new. A report that the Prussian Uhlans were advancing—they actually had got half way from Amiens—and the unlikelihood of being able to practise his buttonholing art on them, drove him from the place, to the intense satisfaction of all left behind.

Jawbanks told me more of Gaussen. He had been kicked out of the Austrian service for cheating. His game was well known at Boulogne, and finally attracted the attention of the authorities. One day, while the gendarmes watched the English boats at Boulogne, expecting his embarkation, he was already on board one at Calais, and so escaped by the skin of his teeth.

Some friends have suggested my unprecedented luck is capable of easy explanation. On the supposition that my right-hand player was an artiste prestidigitateur (which no doubt he was), be it remembered he 'went out' like a shot in almost less than no time. One ace he had therefore dealt unintentionally. The other three he had probably massed together ready for manipulation. To borrow a metaphor from 'the road' in these coaching days, 'he had not his four (aces) well in hand, and was only working unicorn.'

On my taking the cards from him I may have scantily shuffled them, and left the ace arrangement undisturbed. This I consider a more probable solution of my extraordinary turn up than ascribing it to mere chance. Anyway it was what Puck might call a clear case of 'unearned luck.'

THE SOCIAL SCIENCE CONGRESS.

It can scarcely be offered as an original remark that the present is, *inter alia*, an age of congresses. The liveliness with which ecclesiastical, legal, political, archæological, scientific, literary, artistic, and social questions are agitated, combined with the ever-increasing facilities of locomotion, and the disposition to take advantage of them, determine the annual or periodic meeting of people whose tendencies to activity take generally the same form, or lie in the same general direction. It is too late to debate the expediency of such conferences; for the question has been repeatedly solved on the *ambulando* principle by the frequency of their occurrence, and, in many cases, the ascertained value of their results. And if the claims of any society whatsoever to hold a congress are to be allowed, the right to the friendly verbal expression of conflicting or concurrent opinion may be conceded amongst the foremost to a corporation which to so large an extent seeks by social friction and intercourse after the improvement of all social relations.

This year the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, with which is united the Society for Promoting the Amendment of the Law, attained its majority, celebrating its twenty-first annual congress from the 19th to the 26th of September at Aberdeen. Scotland, as a whole, does not offer a very wealthy or varied field for the wanderings of peripatetic associations. Four only of her towns present such features of attraction, or possess such considerations of extent and population, as to induce planetary bodies like the British Association or the Social Science Association to pay them a visit. In each of these four towns, the former, at one period or another of its existence, has found a local habitation; but up to the present year, the metropolitan cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow alone had received the honour of a visit from the latter. When, in 1859, the British Association broke away from ordinary routine and custom so far as to go north to the city whose municipality rests upon the Dee, it was thought to have taken a step not altogether free from imprudence. Yet the meeting then was a most successful one; and it may be said that the result of the recent Social Science Congress has been similar to what it was in connection with the older association eighteen years ago. For, considering the geographical position of the 'granite city,' and its remoteness from the recognised centres of commerce and social advancement, the meeting was a great and, in some respects, even a surprising success. Those who know the Association best, and who have been longest connected with the working out of its business, have expressed their unmeasured delight, not only with the way in which the sympathies of the locality were enlisted in support of the Association, but also with the exceptionally complete arrangements made for the reception and accommodation of the Congress. The buildings of Marischal College proved to be all that could be de-

sired for the purposes of the meetings of the various departments; and the convenience of having them all accommodated under one roof was the theme of general remark, such an arrangement adding much to the freedom and facility of choice of attendance, and the circulation of members from one department to another, according as each in turn presented objects of peculiar interest and attraction. The whole city was *en fête;* the municipality were magnificent in the state banquet offered to their guests; the Society of Advocates and other local societies were elegantly hospitable in their *conversaziones;* private entertainments were constantly in process; and open house seemed to be the order of the week with a large proportion of the citizens. The Congress, too, had an advantage in the local prestige of the Earl of Aberdeen, the President for the year, and of the ex-President, the Marquis of Huntly.

The Association is necessarily an association of life and progress; its prosperity, if not its existence, depends on its assimilation or ventilation of novelties. Its object, as has been authoritatively declared, 'is not to put forward dogmatic views, or to be a propaganda for particular social beliefs; but it is to encourage free discussion, to promote interchange of opinion, and to afford an arena for fair inquiry and debate.' Under cover of such a manifesto it is of course possible for crotchety people, riders of hobbies and inventors of panaceas, to obtrude themselves unduly upon the notice of the members of the Association, and, through them, of the press and the world. Yet it should not be forgotten that the enthusiasm of specialists does much to stimulate the vitality of the Association; and their oddities and bizarreries have certain attractions of their own, even if they did not serve as a foil for the less startling theories of more practical and balanced reformers. With a view to the repression, or partial repression, of bores, it has, we believe, been felt before, as it was felt at Aberdeen, that the general secretaries of departments would do well in arranging business to trust somewhat more to the intelligence and judgment of their local assistants, who are reasonably supposed to have a more intimate knowledge of the public to whom, for the time, the Association more directly addresses itself, and who, consequently, have a shrewd idea of what will so commend itself to the audience as to excite fresh interest and promote useful discussion. They would, conversely, have an educated instinct of the class of papers to be avoided or discouraged, on account of the probable risk they ran of being delivered to empty benches. On the whole, the action of the Association may be characterised as useful and benevolent; tending to the greatest happiness of the greatest number; to the promotion of comfort, health, and refinement in the houses and surroundings of all classes of both urban and rural populations; to the wider diffusion of sweetness and light; to the furtherance of justice and kindliness in laws and punishments, in codes and contracts; and to the general extension of sympathy and mutual respect and forbearance.

The business of the Congress, apart from the able and unaffected opening address of Lord Aberdeen—in the course of which he dwelt at length with the subjects of prison labour, increased house accommodation for the working classes, and the temperance question—on the 19th, and the clos-

ing proceedings on the 26th of September, was carried on in five several departments: (1) Jurisprudence and Amendment of the Law, comprehending the two distinct sections of (*a*) International and Municipal Law, and (*b*) Repression of Crime; (2) Education; (3) Health; (4) Economy and Trade; and (5) Art. Of these the departments of Art and Education were the most constant in their popular interest and attractiveness; whilst the attendance at the others varied from a crowd to zero, according to the paper which was, for the time being, delivered or discussed. The addresses by presidents of departments, which were delivered in the Great Hall of Marischal College each morning before the business of the departments commenced, were, as a rule, crowded in their attendance; and their quality and their freshness and pertinence in connection with various phases of the social and political life of the time were such as to give them a real value. It has been pertinently remarked that, if the late Congress had produced nothing else, these addresses—especially those of Lord Young (Education), Mr. Edwin Chadwick (Health), and Mr. Caird (Economy and Trade)—would of themselves have formed a respectable contribution to the social science of the period.

The fulness and ability with which various phases of the Education question were discussed was quite remarkable; the commencing papers being by Professor Alexander Bain and Mr. C. Stuart Parker, upon the merits and defects of the present system of competitive examination for public appointments. Lord Salisbury's scheme, so far as it has been revealed, not unnaturally came in for its full share of deprecation, especially on the part of those interested in maintaining or extending the connection of the Scottish Universities with the Indian Civil Service. In the course of the proceedings, Professor Bain elaborately vindicated the claims of scientific as against linguistic training; and his arguments, whilst warmly combated by some of the speakers, were ignored by Sir Alexander Grant, Principal of the University of Edinburgh, on the ground that the question was one which would require many years' discussion and further experience before it could be solved. The question, however, cropped up again and again in the course of the Congress; and on the whole there seemed to be a forming rather than a formed opinion in favour of at least a modified statement of Professor Bain's position, which in the future would be likely to be indefinitely approached, if not adopted. It was likely, however, to be the question of a century. Another discussion of an extremely interesting nature was carried on in the same department, in a great degree by ladies, being introduced by papers on 'The Higher Education of Women in Scotland,' and in 'University Local Examinations for Girls and Women,' contributed respectively by Miss Louisa Stevenson, and by Mrs. Struthers of Aberdeen. Miss Becker elicited some cheers and laughter in the course of her statement of her objection to the idea that the education of women should be considered as a thing apart from the education of the people. 'She fervently hoped that the time would come when they would hear nothing further of women at all. She saw no reason for separate schools and universities, any more than for separate churches.'

The Health department, without introducing anything so heroic or imaginative as Dr. Richardson's celebrated 'Hygeia,' opened out useful and apposite discussions in several directions; and the department of Economy and Trade produced some thoughtful and valuable papers, a short one by Professor Sheldon Amos on the 'Probable Influence of Industrial and Commercial Progress on War' being remarkable for the power of its reasoning, and the terse lucidity of its condensation. Questions of the Administration of the Poor-laws, of Scotch Banking, and of Expenditure Redemption Societies were relieved by Miss Lydia Becker's paper on the 'Woman's Suffrage Question;' the audience to hear which was so large that an adjournment had to be made to the Great Hall of the College. It is almost a matter of course to have to say that the paper was forcible, and that the debate which followed upon it was keenly contested; but the arguments on one side and the other were scarcely novel enough to entitle the matter to a more extended notice.

'Ladies' Questions' also emerged in the department of Jurisprudence, when Mr. John McLaren, an Edinburgh advocate and son of the M.P. for that city, read a paper on 'Married Women's Property;' in commenting upon which Professor Sheldon Amos said that generally wherever the law interfered, it did so to protect the weaker, but in this particular instance it came in and assisted the stronger. Miss Burton advocated a partnership between husband and wife, with an application of the law as it is applied to partnerships in business. She did not think the women ought to be exempt under bankruptcy, 'because wives had often a very great deal to do with their husbands becoming bankrupt.' There was likewise a crowd and a flutter in the same section when Mr. John Boyd Kinnear read his paper on the 'Law of Marriage;' and Miss Burton ably treated an important subject referring to the 'Regulation by Legislation of the Labour of Women in Factories.' Alluding to the point that legislation restricting the hours of women's work was caused by philanthropic motives, Miss Burton and Miss Lucy Wilson agreed in their objection to women being oppressed because men had 'philanthropic considerations.' 'Any legislation that interfered with the freedom of the individual in honest work could only be excused as a temporary measure, and to remedy a temporary fault. When it had served that purpose it ought to be abandoned.' Men feared the competition of women, and hence they favoured restrictive legislation when applied to women, which they would not tolerate if it were sought to apply it to themselves. According to Miss Burton, men wanted the hours of women restricted, in order that they themselves might have less hours to work; and women suffered more from idle and drunken husbands than from the wage-work they had to do.

It remains to mention—the laws of space will not allow of more—the thorough and thoughtful paper contributed by Professor W. A. Hunter, of University College, London, on the Law of Contract between Landlord and Tenant, which elicited a lively discussion, the general current of which seemed to favour the idea of freedom of contract, with generous sympathy and good feeling between the proprietor and the occupier of the land. The section for the Repression of Crime was

illustrated with suggestive papers by Sheriff Dove Wilson, Major Ross, and other contributors, which gave rise to fruitful and lively debates.

In the Art department, the sittings of which, fittingly presided over by Lord Ronald Leveson-Gower, were comparatively few, the question was raised, in papers by Mr. George Aitchison and Mr. E. M. Ward, R.A., as to 'What principles should govern the Restoration of Ancient Buildings, or their Preservation as Memorials?' Mr. J. Forbes Robertson, of the *Art Journal*, in a vigorous paper, raised the question, 'Is our modern system of Art Competition favourable or unfavourable to Art Progress?' whilst Miss Burton enforced the thesis, 'Beauty not incompatible with Labour.' One of the most valuable, and probably the most practical, of the contributions to the department of Art, however, was the fresh and useful paper by Mr. J. Forbes White, offered as an answer to the question, 'How can Art be best introduced into the Houses of Persons of Limited Income?' The burden of the paper was to show how, in the case of even those of very limited means, the refining influences of true art can be readily commanded, where the taste exists; and the usefulness of illustrated periodicals as humanising influences was justly enforced.

Pleasant memories cling to the accidents of the Congress—the entertainments already referred to, and the excursions to Balmoral, to which her Majesty invited the members and associates; to Dunecht, where Lord Lindsay made his guests free of his hospitality and his observatory; to Stonehaven and Dunottar Castle, where Dr. Longmuir and Major Innes expounded the antiquities of the fortress and the geology of the district; to Aboyne Castle, where the Marquis of Huntly received a specially invited company; and to Haddo House, where the noble President of the Association gave a genial welcome to about a hundred of the Congressists who from various causes had claims upon such consideration.

THE SONG OF THE DANCE.

'It really seems the ambition of each fashionable woman to render her dress more like a skin than that of her neighbour, besides exhibiting as large a portion of the real flesh as can be done without the apology for raiment absolutely dropping off.' *The World*, Jan. 31, 1877.

WITH arms a-wearied of fanning herself,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A wallflower sat on a stiff-backed chair,
Wishing herself in bed.
Turn, twirl, and turn;
With hop, with glide, and prance;
And still, as she sleepily gazed on that throng,
She muttered the 'Song of the Dance.'

'Dance, dance, dance,
Till I hear the milkman's cry;
Dance, dance, dance,
Till the sun is seen on high.
It's O to be a nigger,
Nor mind to clotheless feel,
If civilised folk will try how little
They need their bodies conceal!

Dance, dance, dance,
Till the heat is horrid to bear;
Dance, dance, dance,
Till I long for a cushioned chair.
Waltz, gallop, and waltz;
A Lancer, a stray quadrille,
Till the whirl and the music make me doze,
And dreaming I watch them still.

O men with wives and sisters,
Have ye no eyes to see
That the scanty dress of the ballet-girl
By your kin ne'er worn should be?
Twirl, turn, and twirl;
Morality, where art thou?
The dance and the dress of the stage—and worse—
Are those of the ballroom now!

But why do I talk of morality
Since Fashion its morals makes?
What Fashion does is never wrong,
So Purity never quakes.
For Purity only takes
Her sip of the cup that Fashion fills;
And we know that cup is made of gold,
And that gold will cover a thousand ills.

Dance, dance, dance;
They never tired appear:
And all in hopes that a wished-for vow
May fall on their foolish ear.
Alas, how the morn will show
The work of the midnight air;
And the paint will trace on many a face,
And show false locks of hair!

Dance, dance, dance;
How sweetly they keep time,
As they dance, dance, dance,
In a measure quite sublime!
They waltz, waltz, waltz,
Keep time to the glorious band;
But, ah, there is many a blushing look,
And pressure of many a hand.'

Thus wearied out with fanning herself,
With eyelids heavy and red,
This wallflower sat on a stiff-backed chair,
Wishing herself in bed.
While all were swinging with turn and twirl,
With hop and glide and prance,
She muttered this song to herself, and said,
'Alas, where is morality fled,
Since true is my "Song of the Dance"?'

CECIL MAXWELL LYTE.

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

UNFREQUENTED BRITISH ISLANDS.

I HAVE always had a passion for deserted and inaccessible islands. I like them very much, and in my time I have travelled to several of them. I rather enjoy the idea of a desolate island. I quite envy one friend who has resided on Ascension Island, and was perfectly satiated with turtle; and another who has visited Tristan d'Acunha; and another who has been at Norfolk Island, once a Purgatorio, and now a Paradise. I have never been quite able to sympathise with Juan Fernandez or Robinson Crusoe. According to De Foe's account his life was a prolonged picnic. Whenever he wanted anything there was always a ship opportunely wrecked, with enough poultry and live stock, cutlery and furniture, biscuits and strong waters, to set up a family of moderate desires for a lifetime. I should be sorry to be in a ship near the mouth of the Orinoco if Mr. R. Crusoe was in want of anything good. The gentleman of morose disposition, who considered that conversation was the bane of society, might pass his time very happily in what the Irishman called 'a dissolute island.' I remember how the islands impressed old Johnson when he went out to the Hebrides. He would repeat the lines,

> 'Every island is a prison
> Closely guarded by the sea.'

I don't think Sir Walter ever succeeded better than when he laid the scene of the *Pirate* on an island. Only the other day we all heard the affecting story of the island in the Outer Hebrides, which was left long unvisited, and very nearly approached starvation point before the people were relieved. That certainly is not a pleasant side of the case.

That guide, philosopher, and friend of my early youth, Mr. Maunder, who issued so many literary treasures, informed me in early life that the islands of the British Empire were 5000 in number. With every possible respect for Maunder, I really do not think that there can be so many at the present time. It all depends on what you call an island. You may raise or depress the number below Mr. Maunder's statements. When you are at the Lizard, or what you imagine to be the southernmost part of England, you see an inaccessible rock before you, which some people provokingly call an island, and they provokingly tell you that you must go to that island before you can say that you have been at the most southerly point of England. A writer in the *Saturday Review* once said that the Scilly Islands consisted of about thirty-seven inhabited islands. The inhabited islets are only five, but if you call the big rocks of that fantastic archipelago by the name of islands their number will be about a hundred and fifty. The late Mr. Smith of Tresco had a very good idea of making an island comfortable for his friends, and also uncomfortable for his people. If he did not like a family, he thought nothing of deporting them all, bag and baggage, across the water to the mainland. He treated them as if they were 'unspeakable Turks.' But the Abbey

itself was very delicious, and the island resembled Calypso's, with the groves, the orange and lemon trees, and the lake with those stately swans who took a placid journey of forty miles of salt water from Trescow to Penzance.

I know some charming islands. There are some which just make up a gentleman's estate; some which just make up a farmer's holding. I was particularly pleased with Caldy Island. It is about three miles from Tenby, to which it acts as a kind of natural breakwater. I was of opinion that a man could live very comfortably there. But although the distance from the mainland is so short, you might be beating about for hours and hours before you effect a landing. I took a look at Hayling Island, off Hampshire, the other day. You can hardly call it an island when you run into it by railway. Watering-places now advertise themselves on railway stations and in the newspapers, and Hayling is justly described as very 'retired.'

Once I went to see two islands on the Glamorganshire coast, Sully and Barry. I did not care anything for Sully. It is not much better than that unfortunate rock off the Lizard. It belongs to one of the iron kings, Ivor-Guest, who I think might have made more of it and of the adjoining mansion house. I was thoroughly delighted with Barry Island. It is about a dozen miles from a railway station, which, to my mind, is in itself a recommendation. I do not know whether it can be reached at low water. When I visited it the tide was running with great violence, and there were waves which would do credit to the Bay of Biscay. There are times of the year in which the few inhabitants cannot cross over for church weeks and weeks together. The island makes a compact farm, and there is obviously no need of hedges. The farmer keeps a little inn as well, where he dispenses homely and comfortable fare. Sometimes in the summer, but very rarely, steamboats come and land quite a population on the little island. We had steaks cut from the conger-eel, not at all so bad. These conger-eels have been known to break a sailor's leg. I know of a man who bought a swan at Leadenhall Market, and took it home in a cab, and the swan with a flap of its wing broke his arm. You would require to provision yourself well for the winter in a little island like this—strong doors and windows and walls tightly built. The situation would have its charms for some; you would be independent and solitary to any extent.

Midway between the south coast of Wales and the north coast of Devon and Cornwall lies the island of Lundy, at times hanging cloudlike over the sea, at times clearly visible enough, at times shrouded with the summer mists. The island is a landmark for summer tourists on either side of the Bristol Channel, but there are only few who venture upon a visit. There is a legend of a party of clergymen—five or six incumbents on the mainland of Devon, to which county the island belongs—who ventured out on a summer day, and were kept prisoners for several weeks. The island rises abruptly to a sheer height, with deep water all around; at times there are hundreds of vessels lying on the lee-side for protection from the western gales. The wild sea-birds crowd on the rocks, and formerly the gannets, now decreasing, formed the principal revenue of the island, and there are layers of guano which

remind us of the Peruvian coast. Numberless vessels have been wrecked upon this island, and once or twice naked shipwrecked sailors have walked into the house of the proprietor, the wreck having been unobserved amid the mist and violence of the storm. This storm-set rocky islet—for it is little more—in troublous times has been a very nest of piracy and rebellion. The people say that at different times the Turks, the French, the Spanish, and the Dutch have taken temporary possession of the island, pillaged it, and gone away. It is difficult, or rather impossible, to verify these traditions. The story, for instance, is found in all the guide-books that the crew of a vessel, pretending to be Dutch, asked leave to inter a corpse in Christian ground; and then, when the burial party had obtained possession of the church, they threw off their disguise, showed themselves to be armed Frenchmen, made prisoners, and ravaged the island. Now it is somewhat remarkable that what the English say of the French at Lundy, the French say of the English at Sark, and pretty well give the same date. In the time of Queen Anne the French did for a while hold Lundy, and made it a privateering station. In these days of far-reaching ordnance the possession of Lundy would pretty well command the Bristol Channel. It holds 'the gates of the Severn Sea.' At the present time there is a battery of two eighteen-pounders, which are fired every ten minutes in foggy weather; and above is the lighthouse, the most prominent object in the island. The ports of the Bristol Channel have petitioned the Post-master-General that a telegraphic communication may be established with Lundy. The merchants say that about a million of vessels pass the island in a year, and might all have been reported if there had been telegraphic communication. Very little information about Lundy is to be found in local histories, but since our public records have been made available a great deal has been found out about the islet. From the ruined castle, decayed fish-ponds, and other indications it seems that the island was once a much more important place than at present. One lord of it, who is chiefly mentioned, William de Marisco, having been taken prisoner after a long course of rapine, was hung, drawn, and quartered, and his island forfeited to the king. It has since passed through many hands, and was last purchased by Mr. W. Heaven, in 1840, for 9400 guineas, who has been an admirable settled proprietor, while the Rev. J. G. Heaven has industriously studied the flora and fauna of the island. A little book, by Mr. Chanter, has lately been published about the island, but the execution is hardly equal to the design.

There are other English islands which would well deserve discussion. A gentleman has just left an immense sum to found a bishopric for Northumberland, and it is proposed that the name of the see should be derived from Lindisfarne or the Holy Island. The old diocese included a large part of Scotland as well as the north-east of England. The Manxmen have been astonished by the visitors who have come to the Isle of Man. From the mountain peaks of England and Wales it is discerned by visitors, and a constant object to those who traverse the narrow seas. Then we have islands which are only islands by courtesy, as Sheppy, cut off by the Swale, and the Isle of Achil,

only separated by a narrow channel from county Mayo. The south Isles of Arran form an especially remarkable group, as they contain many interesting remains of forts, churches, and primitive inhabitants of Ireland. When we come to Scotland we are simply overwhelmed by the variety of topics suggested by the multiplicity of islands. But it is pleasant to read about them, and we would suggest to enterprising yachtsmen that they might do worse than cruise about the ancient Cassiterides, and what we may call the Cyclades and Sporades of our own western and northern waters.

ELECTRICAL TRANSMISSION OF SOUND.

One of the earliest observations made connected with electro-magnets (bars of iron round which electrical currents are made to circulate, so as to convert the bars into magnets for the time being) was that on cutting off the current an audible tick or sound was emitted from the magnet. By placing a soft iron rod on a sounding-board, and wrapping round it the coils of insulated wire to convey the current, an instrument is obtained, by means of which a sound distinctly audible in a moderately large room is produced whenever the electrical circuit is interrupted so as to 'break' the current. The production of this sound was traced by Wertheim to the circumstance that when soft iron is temporarily magnetised it lengthens somewhat, and suddenly retracts again when demagnetised by the cessation of the electrical current; according to Joule, the increase in length of the bar is one part in 27,000. Inasmuch as a current can readily be conveyed over long distances by telegraph-wires, it is obvious that the means of transmission of musical sounds by electricity are presented by this phenomenon, provided an instrument can be so arranged that the sound to be transmitted shall automatically cut off and reëstablish the current from the telegraph-wire as many times per second as corresponds to the pitch of the note transmitted; for in this way the magnet will be caused to emit as many ticks per second as there are conveyed currents, and thus a distinct musical note will be produced; it being known that a sound reiterated fifteen or twenty times per second produces on the human ear the sensation of a low bass note, whilst if repeated more rapidly a note is given, the greater or less shrillness of which depends on the number of vibrations per second communicated to the air by the frequent reiteration of the sounds. Thus if a piece of card or thin metal be held against the teeth of a small cog-wheel in rapid rotation, so that each tooth of the wheel in succession may gently strike against the card, a distinct musical note is produced; indeed it is by an apparatus depending on this principle that many of the laws of acoustics as connected with musical sounds and harmony are usually demonstrated. The speed of rotation of the wheel being known, and the number of teeth on it, the precise number of pulsations per second corresponding to a note of any given pitch is readily ascertained, and the ratio between the number of pulsations required for any given note, and another one sounding in harmony therewith (or the reverse), can be readily found: thus two notes sounding octaves are given when the pulsation-speed is as one to two; the interval of a fifth is produced

when the ratio is two to three; and so on.*

In order to make the sound itself interrupt the current, an arrangement was invented by a German (Riess) in 1861, consisting of a hollow wooden box with a trumpet mouth in front. On the top is a circular hole covered with bladder or other membrane capable of vibrating; so that on singing in at the mouthpiece the bladder vibrates in proportion to the notes sung. By placing on the upper surface of the vibrating membrane a slip of thin metal connected with the galvanic battery employed, it is easy to make each vibration of the bladder interrupt the current, a light wire connected with the telegraph-wire being so arranged as to come into contact with the slip of metal, and to break contact each time the membrane oscillates. In this arrangement, however, the peculiar differences in the qualities of sounds, distinguished as 'timbre,' are of necessity not indicated, the interruptions of the current depending solely on the *pitch* of the note; so that the same sound would be given out by the vibrating iron rod at the far end when a given note was sounded in the vicinity of the transmitting instrument, whether the note were produced by a violin, the human voice, a cornet-à-piston, or any other musical instrument; moreover, the sound emitted at the far end has a peculiar character or twang of its own, not altogether unlike a child's squeaking penny trumpet. Saving as a scientific toy, this form of apparatus attracted but little attention, and Riess's telephone, as it was called, was not of much practical value.

* The ratios between the rates of vibration required to produce the musical notes C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C, of the octave are respectively 1, $\frac{8}{7}$, $\frac{4}{3}$, $\frac{3}{2}$, $\frac{5}{3}$, $\frac{5}{4}$, $\frac{15}{8}$, and 2.

Some few years later, it was observed by an Englishman (Cromwell Varley) that if what is known to electricians as a 'condenser' be charged with high-tension electricity, and discharged again rapidly, a distinctly audible sound is produced, somewhat resembling that of a hautboy when the discharges succeed one another sufficiently rapidly to produce a musical note. The condenser employed to develop these sounds was simply a hoop or tambourine, over which was stretched a series of membranes of insulating material with conducting surfaces alternating; when the pulsating electrical currents pass into the condensing surfaces, sufficiently rapidly vibration of the whole is set up. In order to transmit the pulsating currents, a peculiar arrangement was adopted, the working of which, as well as of the condenser telephone itself, was exhibited last summer at the Queen's Theatre and the Canterbury Hall. In order to transmit any required tone, a series of tuning-forks is provided, each kept continuously vibrating by electrical means, somewhat as an electrical bell keeps on ringing as long as the button is pressed; each tuning-fork is so arranged that a wire connected with the vibrating limb can 'make and break contact' with each vibration, much as in Riess's instrument, so as to set up a series of currents, and transmit them to the telegraph-wire. By pressing down the keys on a board like a piano keyboard, the current is turned on to any one of the forks as required; and hence a pulsating current is sent through the telegraph-wire, which sets up a corresponding vibration in the condenser at the far end, the note thus produced being simply a reproduction of that given by the particular tuning-fork thrown into the circuit. Apart

from the practical difficulty in getting sufficiently good insulation in long telegraph-wires for the high-tension currents required, especially in certain states of the atmosphere, there are several imperfections in this instrument as a means of transmitting sound. It is not automatic like Riess's, though this objection is easily obviated by suitable alterations in the transmitter; it does not reproduce, any more than Riess's telephone, the sound of any given instrument, much less of a number of sounds produced simultaneously as in an orchestra; and it cannot articulate or indicate *words*, although it will show by the difference in the tones produced the alteration of the *pitch* of the speaker's voice when connected with a Reiss's transmitter.

A year or two after the first production of Varley's condenser telephone (in 1873), a modification was introduced by an American (Elisha Grey), in which the pulsating currents transmitted from tuning-forks were made to set up vibrations in other tuning-forks or analogous apparatus in a receiving apparatus; and this modification was found to be capable of practical adaptation to telegraphic purposes; so much so, that it rendered it easy to transmit four messages simultaneously on the same wire by the use of a peculiar system of connections between the different forks and the wire. Of course this *audible* telegraph, like the needle telegraph and all non-recording systems, is open to the objection that there is no permanent record of the message, as in the case of Bains's electro-chemical recorder and other analogous telegraphic arrangements. The accuracy of the message depends simply on the care and experience of the clerks employed, especially on the receiving clerk, who has to translate into words the sounds of the instrument; the principle of the system being much the same as in the 'Morse' code, where a dot and a dash form the fundamental characters by the combination of which the letters and signs are indicated, a short sound representing the dot, and one continued somewhat longer the dash. No amount of care and attention on the part of clerks is sufficient to prevent accidental mistakes in transmission occurring occasionally, but experience shows that the errors in ordinary telegraphic messages are extremely few as compared with their number. The system of transmitting the sender's own handwriting in fac-simile* alone can obviate the possibility of occasional blunders; and even here mistakes may occasionally creep in by accident. Thus a ludicrous misadventure attended the receipt of two telegrams by a merchant away from home—the one to say that his wife had become the happy mother of a little girl; the other from his partner asking for information as to a draft just paid, but suspected to be forged. By accident the replies were cross-directed, so that the partner received a telegram congratulating him on his happy deliverance, whilst the astounded wife read with horror the message, 'I know nothing about it; it is a regular swindle!'

During the last eighteen months there has been gradually elaborated by an Englishman, now naturalised as an American (Professor Graham Bell), a form of telephone, the capabilities of which are far superior to those of any of the above instruments. At the recent meeting of the British Association an improved form of this instrument was exhibited in action, and excited the

* *London Society*, August 1877, p. 181.

greatest interest, inasmuch as it not only transmitted musical notes of the same 'timbre' and quality as those received, but was also capable of rendering articulation sufficiently clearly to enable most words to be heard with considerable distinctness. Indeed the chief defect of the instrument in its present form would seem to be that the sound transmitted is so low in intensity that it can only be conveniently heard by one person at once, and hence it is *as yet* not capable of allowing different assemblages of people in various cities to listen simultaneously to an oration or concert in a central spot. (What an economy of preaching power, rhetorical display, and eloquence generally will be produced by the probable further improvement of the instrument, so as to render it capable of doing this!) The great simplicity of the apparatus is one of its most remarkable features, all complex machinery for receiving and transmitting being abolished, and no galvanic battery being required to work it. The first suggestion of the mechanism was derived from a patient study of the construction of the human ear, and the earliest forms of apparatus were copied from that organ. During the progress of the experiments considerable alterations and changes in the form of the instrument and its construction were continually made, and it is only quite recently that the apparatus assumed its present simple form. The actual working part of the instrument is a small permanent bar-magnet, round one end of which is wound a coil of thin insulated wire, the ends of which are connected with two binding screws fixed in the small end of a stethoscope-shaped wooden cover. One of these binding screws is connected with the ground ('put to earth') by means of a wire, the other is connected with the telegraph-wire. The magnet is so fixed in the wooden case that the axis of the magnet is in the direction of the length of the case, the coil of wire being at its larger end; at this end the case is closed with a cover having a small circular hole in the centre opposite the pole of the magnet, a small wooden funnel or trumpet mouthpiece being applied beyond the perforated cover. Between this perforation and the end of the magnet is fixed a thin disc of soft iron, which may be tinned over to prevent rusting without interfering with its action. This corresponds to the tympanum or drum of the ear. At the far end of the telegraph-wire a precisely similar arrangement is applied, one binding screw being connected with the telegraph-wire, the other put to earth, so that the transmitter and the receiver are identical in construction and arrangement. On speaking into the mouthpiece at one end of the line the sound sets up a vibration or motion among the particles of the iron disc. In accordance with the laws of electro-magnetic induction the motions of the disc-particles set up inductive currents in the neighbouring coil of wire; for the soft iron plate becomes virtually magnetised by the inductive action of the bar-magnet, and hence as the disc vibrates alterations of distance between magnetised particles and a conducting wire are brought about, which of necessity set up electric currents in the conducting wire. The currents thus produced pass through the telegraph-wire and set up motions in the disc of the receiving instrument precisely correlative with those of the disc of the transmitter. Hence the air in contact with the disc of the receiver is made to vibrate precisely in the same way

as that issuing from the mouth of the speaker, but to a lesser extent, thus reproducing the sounds exactly, only in a much lower tone of voice (*i.e.* much more softly and less loud, not lower in *pitch*). In this way a conversation can be carried on readily, each person alternately speaking into his instrument to transmit his message, and then applying his ear to catch the reply, just as with an ordinary speaking-tube.

Although as yet only in what the inventor describes as an inchoate condition, the articulating telephone (Bell's telephone) is capable of practical use in cases where speaking-tubes are inconvenient on account of the distance, or for other reasons. Thus quite recently it has been tried as a means of signalling from the mouth of a mine or pit to the workings below; no instruction in telegraphic manipulation is required, any ordinary workman being perfectly able to use the instrument. In one respect the arrangement is less convenient than a speaking-tube, inasmuch as it does not enable a would-be speaker to call the attention of an observer near to the far end, but not absolutely listening for a signal, in the same way that the whistling plugs inserted into the mouthpieces of speaking-tubes are used; but doubtless this difficulty is not insuperable, as at the worst it would be easy to have an electric bell worked by a separate wire to give the signal to apply the ear to the telephone.* No doubt, however, further improvements will shortly be made, enabling sounds to be transmitted audible at some distance from the receiving instrument. One inconvenience presents itself, however, which does not seem to be easy to obviate; this is, that the telephone is so sensitive to feeble electric currents, that the telegraph-wire cannot well be made to run along parallel with another wire used for ordinary telegraphic purposes, as in that case the inductive currents produced in the telephone-wire by the passage of currents along the other wire cause audible sounds in the telephone, often seriously interfering with the distinctness of the messages transmitted through the telephone itself.

Amongst the different arrangements employed by Professor Bell is one, a modification of the transmitter of Varley's and of Grey's musical telephones, which enables the sound of a harmonium to be transmitted, the reeds of the instrument being made to 'make and break' the circuit during their vibration in much the same way as the tuning-forks in Varley's transmitter and Grey's instrument. Those interested in the details of the construction of these different arrangements will find much information on the subject in the reports of the papers read and lectures given at the Plymouth meeting of the British Association by Mr. Preece and Professor Bell, from which, indeed, a considerable proportion of the foregoing remarks have been derived.

COLLISIONS AT SEA.

From time to time we are horrified by the occurrence of disastrous maritime accidents, in which it would seem at first sight that the fatal occurrences were due to the negligence of the captains or other officers in not so steering as to avoid the chance of a collision when first that appeared imminent. Recent investigations, however, have thrown quite a new

* Since the above was written, the instrument has been successfully worked with an electric alarum attached to it.

light on the possible causes of these hideous disasters, and have demonstrated that whilst the introduction of steam as a propelling power for ships has been productive of incalculable advantages, it has also brought into play in certain cases an uncertainty in steering power which renders it highly probable that many deserving officers have been unjustly blamed for negligence in cases where their only fault was ignorance of certain laws of hydrodynamic action, at that time unknown. During the past few years Professor Osborne Reynolds has demonstrated, both mathematically on paper and experimentally by means of models, the hitherto unsuspected fact that when a screw steamer with full way on her suddenly reverses her screw, so as to stop as rapidly as possible, the effect of the contrary motion of the screw-blades on the water and thence on the rudder is such as to cause the vessel not only not to answer her helm as readily as if the screw were revolving in the direction appropriate to the actual onward motion of the vessel before she stops, but even to make her head turn in the direction *opposite to* that in which it should normally turn for a given motion of the rudder; so that, for instance, if a screw steamer is on the point of colliding with another vessel, say on the starboard side, and the officer in charge reverses the engines and then gives directions to starboard the helm, so as, as he supposes, to bring the steamer's head round to port, the effect will be that her head will turn to starboard instead of port, and thus the reversal of the screw *brings about more certainly the collision which it was the object of the manœuvre to avoid.* The conclusions derived from these researches have been further verified by actual observations on board various screw vessels by a committee appointed by the British Association, with the result of perfectly confirming the former results; in all cases the effect of reversing the screw is to reverse the normal action of the rudder, no matter whether the vessel was at rest or nearly so to begin with, or whether it had forward way on her. During the past two years attempts have been made to direct the attention of the Admiralty to the importance of the inquiry as bearing on the existing rules and directions for avoiding collisions at sea, with, as might have been expected, very little good effect as yet. However, the report of the British Association committee was discussed last year at the conference of the Association for the Reform and Codification of the Law of Nations at Bremen, and a resolution passed declaring that the existing international rules for preventing collisions at sea are unsatisfactory, and that it is desirable that the Governments of maritime States should take counsel together with a view of amending these rules; so that it is to be hoped that before long some action will be taken in a matter so seriously affecting the lives of all who 'go down to the sea in ships,' and that the absurdity should cease of issuing erroneous instructions, and then blaming a man who, by acting in accordance with these instructions, inevitably brings about a fatal result; whilst the man would be yet more blamed who reasonably endeavoured to avoid mischance by acting as common sense would direct, in opposition to his instructions. At the recent meeting of the British Association a further report of the committee was presented, fully confirming the former results, and calling attention to the various judgments

concerning collisions in the past year, from which it was evident that no consideration of the important facts established had influenced these judgments, and that *many of these collisions might have been prevented had the effect of reversing the screw on the steering been made known officially to officers in charge of ships, and acted upon by them.* Now that ship manœuvring for ramming and torpedo practice, &c., is so important a branch of naval warfare, the inattention paid by the Government to a point so vitally bearing on the whole subject would be positively ludicrous were not its consequences so lamentable.

NEW BOOKS.

Several important works of Eastern travel have recently made their appearance, with which we will deal collectively. We will first bracket the works of Professor Bryce and of Captain Burnaby.* We do so both on account of their agreements and their antagonisms. They made their journeys at the same date; in much they traversed the same ground; and they deal with the same social and political subjects. Then each work has undoubted merit and interest and peculiar characteristics. There is the real cavalry dash about Captain Burnaby. He is an acute observer, amusing, dramatic, impetuous. Mr. Bryce is a man of another stamp. There is no want of physical courage and endurance, as exemplified by his almost unrivalled achievement of the ascent of Mount Ararat. But he is also both a scientific and philosophical observer, and we constantly recognise the scholar and the thinker in his pages. While Captain Burnaby is vehemently pro-Turkish and anti-Russian, Mr. Bryce is thoroughly and exactly the opposite. We may best sum up our views of the different works by saying, that while Captain Burnaby's will be the most popular at the libraries, we shall be more inclined to give a prominent place on our own private bookshelves to Mr. Bryce's volume.

Captain Burnaby had only five months' furlough, and he had to travel some two thousand miles to and fro between Scutari and the Turco-Russian frontier. He took with him a rifle and some medicines; and, on the whole, his pills were at least as useful as his bullets. They possibly did a greater amount of execution. In his present work he exhibits himself in the light of an accomplished literary craftsman. He has not in reality the same story of danger and adventure to tell as in his *Ride to Khiva;* but by his powers in the way of dialogue and description, he certainly contrives both to interest and amuse us. Still, speaking critically, there is a thinness about his work which contrasts strongly with the closely-packed pages of Professor Bryce. We should say, however, that Captain Burnaby in his Appendix brings together a set of State papers which some of his readers will study, and some of them skip. His adventures with servants and horses, with cookery and cartridges, will be found highly amusing. It is interesting to compare his experiences with Dr. Bryce's of the Curds and Circassians. Captain Burnaby penetrated the farther south in Asia Minor; but then, *per contra,* Professor Bryce actually climbed to the summit of Mount Ararat. The paths of the two travellers

* *On Horseback through Asia Minor.* By Captain Fred Burnaby. 2 vols. (Sampson Low & Co.) *Transcaucasia and Ararat: Notes of a Vacation Tour in the Autumn of* 1876. By James Bryce. (Macmillan.)

coincided several times, though they themselves did not meet, at Batoum; and Captain Burnaby came within the shadow of Mount Ararat, though he did not profess to climb it. Both agree in thinking that an independent Armenian power might be created and interposed between Russia and Persia.

Both of these enlightened travellers are severe in their criticisms upon the ladies. Dr. Bryce complains that they want expression; Captain Burnaby complains, still more grievously, that they want washing. One of the sires confessed himself totally unable to understand that in Europe the girls are allowed to choose for themselves, and that there are instances of their preferring a poor man to a rich one. 'I cannot understand that,' quoth one Mohammed. 'If I had a daughter, and she might marry a rich man, but she preferred a poor man, I should whip the girl till she altered her mind.' Professor Bryce allows beauty of complexion and regularity of feature, but there was no soul to light up the face. Asia Minor is a cheap and a very lovely country. If the blessings of good government were secured, poor English families might well emigrate hither, and find an earthly paradise. A sheep can be bought for six shillings, and a horse for little more than six pounds. Eggs are eighty a shilling, and bread and meat about a penny a pound. Similarly Dr. Bryce says that Transcaucasian territories, which support two or three millions, would easily support two- or three-and-twenty millions. Thus emigration is the true answer to the Malthusian theory. If the theory of Malthus had been adopted, England by this time would have been reduced to the rank of a third-rate power. There is a deal of incident, dialogue, and lively description in Captain Burnaby's work. He is thoroughly dramatic. To mention another very good point, there is abundance of excellent maps. Captain Burnaby is too thorough an officer not to know the value of maps. But the volumes abound with good points, presented in life-like detail. Although anxious to say all he can for the Turks, he admits that they depart from the Prophet's injunctions in respect to the use of liquors. An Italian doctor at Angona complained terribly of them: 'They mix up everything together, and then complain of not getting well.' Some curious traits of character are recorded of some young ladies of Aleppo, who wish to distinguish between their lovers. They give their lovers live charcoal, which they are expected to carry until the flesh has been burned to the bone. He confirms everything which Professor Bryce can say about Turkish mismanagement. All the gunpowder for the use of troops in Anatolia is sent from Constantinople, although sulphur, saltpetre, and charcoal are to found in the mountains. The great thing wanted for the prosperity of the country is the development of the mines; but there is almost a prohibitive duty upon mining. Consequently the people cut down the forests instead of using the coal. The people are too lazy to pick up the stone and lead, the gold and silver, which might be found. Turkey has had her chances with a hundred millions of borrowed British capital, and has thrown them away. Let us, however, take up some topics which are not so unfortunately well-worn. The interest of Captain Burnaby's work quickens when he comes to 'the Frat,' as the Euphrates is called. Later he crossed the Araxes on the ice. As he came

away from the direction of Mount Ararat, he came upon a Yezeed, or devil-worshipping village. Their simple system of theology, or anti-theology, is thus described: Allah, the spirit of good, can do no harm to any one, and is a friend to the human race. The spirit of evil can do a great deal of harm, and he is the cause of all our woes. From this starting-point the Yezeeds have been brought to believe that it is a work of time to worship the spirit of good, who will not hurt them, and that the proper course to pursue is to try and propitiate the spirit of evil, who can be very disagreeable if he chooses. The very worst offence that can be given them is to mention the word 'Shaitan.' This offence Captain Burnaby had the misfortune to perpetrate, and he will be held responsible for every cow or camel that dies within the next twelve-month. The American missionaries whom he met might find plenty to do; these gentlemen were generally considered by the people as being under the English flag. Captain Burnaby gave a good deal of attention to the towns of which we have lately been hearing so much in the public prints. Kars was in a filthy state, and typhus would probably slay more than the Russians. Great numbers of troops were massed there, and more could be obtained from Erzeroum. Ardahan he thought ill protected; the Turks had not occupied positions which would give command of the place. Batoum he considers one of the finest harbours in the Black Sea, and well-nigh impregnable. The place was crowded with troops, and here the sanitary arrangements left very little to be desired. Dr. Bryce is strongly of opinion that Batoum ought to be handed over to the Russians. 'Its transfer to them would be really a gain to the world at large, as well as to the conquerors.'

Captain Burnaby's medical experiences are amusing. Every traveller in barbarous or semi-barbarous countries finds it a great advantage to be accepted as a doctor. The Turkish medical system is wretched. Their surgeons can hardly tie up an artery or perform any average operation. They have no such thing as a *post-mortem;* the body of a true believer is sacred, and in this way cases of poisoning escape detection. The Servians, however, gave them a good number of 'subjects' for scientific purposes last year. He freely administered 'fire-paper' (that is to say, mustard-plaster), pills of much potency, and quinine to a lady in a delicate state. He himself had a serious illness, rheumatic-fever; but although he had a European doctor he found that a native remedy, compressed acid fruits soaked in water, did him most good. As we have hinted, throughout the work there is a strong political bias. He believes that he was dodged by Russian spies through a good deal of the journey. Also he believes that the Bulgarians were organised by Russian intriguers. We like Captain Burnaby as a writer, but we believe that he exaggerates his political importance.

We now turn for a few minutes to the companion volume. There are many points in Dr. Bryce's book extremely well-deserving of notice. Such are his accounts of the German colonies which he found established in Russian territory, and his descriptions of such old Oriental cities as Tiflis, Erivan, and Trebizonde. His descriptions, indeed, are wrought with great care, and at times contain passages of remarkable beauty. He discusses whether Mount Ararat is

really the Scripture mountain where the Ark stayed, with a strong leaning to that identification, and appropriately quotes Browning's lines in *Bishop Blougram's Apology*:

'Such a traveller told you his last news—
He saw the Ark atop of Ararat;
But did not climb there since it was getting late,
And robber-bands infest the mountain's foot.'

In old books of travels 'the Ark appears, in shape exactly the ark of the nursery on Sunday afternoons, poised on the summit of Great Ararat.' Very high up upon the mountain Dr. Bryce really did find a bit of shaped timber, the presence of which it is almost impossible to explain, and he justly observes that many traditions have been accepted on less satisfactory evidence. The ascent of the mountain was, really and literally, 'a tall thing.' He was very thinly clad, his tweed having been stolen on a Russian railway. His guides went with him a certain distance, and then one by one fell away. Even his companion was unable to accompany him to the summit. He determined, for he would run no reckless hazard, that if he did not reach it by three in the afternoon, that he would forthwith return. 'All was cloud on every side. Suddenly, to my astonishment, the ground began to fall away to the north; I stopped, a puff of wind drove off the mists on one side, and showed the Araxes plain at an abysmal depth below. It was the top of Ararat.' The Armenians, however, would by no means give credit to this achievement, nor to several authentic achievements that had previously happened. 'This Englishman says that he has ascended to the top of Ararat,' said an Armenian to the archimandrite of the famous monastery at its base. The venerable man smiled sweetly. 'No,' he replied, 'that cannot be. No one has ever been there. It is impossible.' Dr. Bryce holds that the Great Ararat is the most majestic, and the Little Ararat the most elegant, of mountains. The noble thing about Ararat is not the parts, but the whole general impression.

Severe as Captain Burnaby's ride proved at times, as when riding down a glacier, the palm of suffering and endurance seems to us no less to belong to Dr. Bryce. At times he had a pair of boots for his pillow, and a dirty rug for his covering. He is even obliged to draw a veil over the miseries of the swarming floor. 'Memory called up many disagreeable nights—nights in rock-holes on the Alps, nights under canvas amid Icelandic snow-storms, nights in Transylvanian forests, nights in coasting steamers off the coast of Spain, nights in railway waiting-rooms in England; but no night so horrible as this.' He appears to have run more danger than he thought probable at the time from merry Kurds, who might, nevertheless, be murderous cut-throats. At Erivan he writes: 'Yet lately there was a European inn of some pretensions in the city; but its landlord, according to the story told us, had some months before been thrown into prison on a charge of murdering one of his guests, a Greek banker, whose imprudent display of money had roused his cupidity, and the hotel was therefore closed. The cries and groans of the victim, whose throat was being cut, had been heard by various people in the house, none of whom stirred to help him.' Travels such as these have the dignity and excitement of danger, and many Englishmen, who lounge through a Long Vacation 'victims of civilisation,' might seek out countries

where they could do something worthy of record, and extend the limits of our knowledge. Some English do this in many countries, but from the fact that neither Captain Burnaby nor Dr. Bryce met any Englishmen in their travels, it is clear that very few of us are examining what is just now, perhaps, the most interesting country on the world's surface. Dr. Bryce says that Russia has not russianised the provinces she has annexed, and that with her want of money she can do no more in the way of annexation. Her duty is to develop her own internal resources. Thus far Dr. Bryce.

Another book of travels which calls for attention is one with the tempting title *Under the Balkans*.* The volume belongs to the class *mémoires pour servir à l'histoire*, and gives us the experience of an independent and impartial observer of facts. We had hoped that Mr. More would have told us something of the scenery of the Balkans, and have sketched the outlines of the history that belongs to this celebrated range. Mr. More's scope is more limited, and is as follows: He was at Philippopolis last year with a friend, and was brought into constant contact with the population of a large tract of country. He carefully went over the ground of the massacres, verifying the statements in the newspapers and in the consular reports. He has had the opportunity of watching the administration of the various committees of relief. As a quick-sighted traveller he made many observations of his own, which he details in a lively manner. He had the great advantage of some intercourse with M. Vambéry before he arrived at Constantinople. He gives a clear account of the admirable system of elementary education in Bulgaria, which argues that the people are quite ripe for self-government in case the district becomes autonomous, as one of the results of the present war. We think, however, that Mr. More ignores a good deal of English work when he says that the only knowledge which Turks and Bulgarians have had of Western Christianity has been through American missionaries. It appears that the Russians had promptly given several thousand pounds for the relief of the Bulgarians before we had taken any action in England. A committee of consuls formed in Turkey a very effective body, and they distributed sixty thousand pounds; one generous Englishman, Mr. Mackenzie, gave away six thousand pounds of his own money. He gives striking instances of the kindness of the poor priests, who, despite their own losses, gave food and protection to all whom they could possibly help. Our author repeats some of the old stories, only too well founded, with almost painful minuteness. He is convinced that the regular troops were as guilty as the irregulars, and the Mudirs were forced with reluctance to execute the stringent instructions which they received. He met some of the Bashi-Bazouks, cut-throat swarthy-looking men, mounted on mules and horses, armed with long guns, yataghans, and pistols, and well known for the part they took in the massacres and pillaging of May. These sad narratives are varied by chapters on burial and marriage ceremonies and cognate subjects. Mr. More himself took an active part in the distribution of Lady Strangford's fund. He has received a great deal of assistance from Mr.

* *Under the Balkans: Notes of a Visit to the District of Philippopolis in* 1876. By Robert Jasper More. (Henry S. King.)

Denton, and repeatedly refers to that gentleman's useful Eastern books. Mr. Denton's influence pervades the volume. We do not say that it is not a perfectly legitimate influence, but it is one which completely accounts for Mr. More's political opinion. He brings together much scattered information in a condensed and convenient form.

It is like stepping out of a hot crowded theatre, where we have been witnessing melodrama, into the quiet night and the fresh air, to take up the story of the Chickenborough Chit-Chat Club.* There is great freshness and liveliness about the work, which abounds with the Comedy of Manner, to use the phrase applied to the writings of Menander. To a considerable extent it is a clerical novel, and the clerics to a considerable extent constitute the comic element. A young curate, having preached a very strict sermon on the observance of Lent, thought it right to cut himself off from all dinner and evening parties; but finding the tedium intolerable, he starts a sort of literary and social club, which is the pivot on which the story revolves. The anonymous author hardly understands the clergy, and degenerates into mere caricatures. But we are bound to say the novel has the least possible spice of malice in the descriptions, and is uniformly wholesome and cheerful. We just quote an amusing passage, in which a kind-hearted vulgar mistress addresses her maidens, and the author moralises thereon: 'I don't want no nasty differences in my 'ouse. The one of you will be as good as the other, so long as you be'ave yourselves. The one as does the bedrooms will be the upper 'ousemaid, and the one as does the sitting-rooms will be the lower 'ousemaid, 'cos of course 'er work is lower down; and you may just choose yourselves which will be which.' Thus was established a delightful democracy of titles; shibbolethic distinctions became equally honourable. There was perfect unanimity between high and low in this secular establishment, as would to Heaven there was in that ecclesiastical one where the ministerial housemaids squabble from morning until eve, and the rooms are so imperfectly dusted.

* *The Chickenborough Chit-Chat Club.* By Kamouraska. Three vols. (Tinsley Brothers.)

THE MODERN ZODIAC:

AN ARTIST'S ALMANAC OF ENGLISH SOCIETY.

LONDON SOCIETY.

DECEMBER 1877.

'LOVED FOR HER OWN SWEET SAKE.'

CHAPTER I.

'A boat beneath a sunny sky,
Lingering onward dreamily,
In an evening of July.'
LEWIS CARROLL.

'AND so you do not even know her?'

'No, not I, *ma foi;* I only wish I did. I should have been a very different man had I only had that good fortune some years since.'

'Married, most likely; with a pack of screaming children, and your every prospect as a soldier blighted, if not blasted.'

'Granted the first, for the sake of argument; a proper application of "stick," applied as we have learnt in the far East it should be applied, deals with the second; as for the latter part of your suggestion, I think it not worth answering.'

'And why?'

'Well, you shall answer it yourself. I, as I tell you, do not even know the lady; you do. Now give me your candid opinion of her.'

'I will; but remember it's only a soldier's opinion, and—'

'And therefore all the more valuable if it is a good one.'

'Well, listen: as true a lady as ever stepped, and one who keeps her position, placed as she is amidst a thousand dangers, with a quiet womanly simplicity which wins respect from even her own sex. Pretty she certainly is, and well versed in all those accomplishments pronounced necessary by society. Very reserved, at times cold as ice in her manner, and treats every one with the same freezing politeness. She—'

'Halt, my dear fellow; you have in all truth said enough to prove your suggestion worthless. Did I wish to find some fair lady to take my name and keep good watch and ward over it, methinks your friend would add one more name to her list of proposals.'

'Her list? Ha, ha! you little know *la belle* Edith Lennox if you think she has ever been proposed to.'

'I have told you I do not know her at all. But seriously, some *one* of the many actors she meets must have fallen in love with her.'

'It may be so, and yet I have never heard even the suspicion of such a thing breathed; indeed, I would wager my life that if any of them ever did, they never told their story. She is too cold, and

men of that class soon falter in their allegiance when the fortress holds out day after day with the same never-changing aspect, while all around faces as fair and arms as soft are ready to welcome them.'

'But how about officers, young fellows like you and I—have you never seen any of them win their way, while others dropped out of the hunt?'

'O yes, "many a time and oft;" but not with her. My dear Jack, every one knows the British officer is a bold brave man, but I have never yet seen or heard of one bold or brave enough to propose to her. Apart from her own reserved manner, she is nearly always accompanied by some one, a relation or a servant—the "third wheel to a gun"—which (as with the real one) might be dispensed with on all ordinary occasions.'

'Well, I must confess the picture you draw is not encouraging; still you know the effect that girl had on me the first time I saw her.'

'I shall never forget it, never; not if I live to be a thousand.'

'Five long years ago now, and still a beautiful dream-memory. I have seen girls as fair, nay fairer, often and often; they have faded one and all out of my remembrance—I could not recall one feature; but shut my eyes for an instant and think of Edith Lennox, and into life starts every feature of that sweet face, while a voice which must win every hearer's heart murmurs through an atmosphere steeped in delicious memories of days when the bloom of the fruit was still on one's life, and first love made itself heard irresistibly.'

'O, go on; don't mind me; rave away! You'll end your days in a lunatic asylum yet. I fancy I see you already sitting in the sunlight in the middle of a cell, with a straw hat on, fancying yourself a poet.'

'And for you, what dark fate shall I prophesy? Married to a strong-minded woman, all "women's rights" and "men's clothes," with plenty of money and no feeling. Never an action of your own permitted without a surveillance that will make life almost worthless; never a day without the taunt, "I made you what you are." Ha, ha, ha! If true love be a bad sort of speculation for a soldier somewhile used to command, what must mock love be when the golden bands show the iron beneath, and one sinks below the level of one's servants; "out of it" altogether where one ought to be captain and leader and lord, and when one awakes, as many a good fellow has done and will again, to find that plus wife minus love is—'

'What?'

'The very mischief.'

'Bravo, Jack! Upon my word you ought to write a book, just for the sake of trying to put society "straight." Publish it in the form of a tract, and leave a number here and there in railway stations.'

'So I will some day, and put your "ugly countenance" in as a frontispiece.'

'For this and all other compliments the—may I be made thankful!'

'But come now, be serious for one minute. Remember, I hold you to your promise; you will introduce me to Miss Lennox the first opportunity after we arrive in England.'

'O poor misguided youth, yes.'

The above conversation takes place between two young officers half lying, half [illegible]ng on the deck of a P. and O. steamer wending her homeward way swiftly, silently, through a dead calm

in the Bay of Bengal; the time is late in the afternoon, late in July; the atmosphere, which all day had been like a burning fiery furnace in spite of double awnings, seems gradually cooling down as the sun sinks lower and lower, till from sky-line to vessel and far away beyond stretches a pathway of gold. A moment, and he is gone; darkness comes, up gets the moon, and before one can look round almost 'tis night. Five years away from home (both of them), all of it spent in the 'far East,' not related in any way, simply friends. Brother officers, bound together by that comradeship which springs from constant association, and sharing common dangers, ready to do anything the one for the other. Both good-looking, and unmistakably soldiers, right good manly fellows. Jack Kavanagh and Charlie Graham, 'twere hard for any woman to choose between ye as ye lie there in the moonlight; many a heart-ache are you fated to cause in dear old England ere the 'old year's out and the new year in.'

The voyage drags out its weary length, quickly when in sight of land, O so wearily, drearily, when naught but sea and sky are visible.

Ceylon is reached, and the run along its southern shore does much to kill monotony. It is early morning, and a light breeze from seaward helps the sun to scatter the night mists clinging to wood or mountain; surely as the mist clears off 'tis fairyland at last we see. Can any landscape be fairer? hill after hill, mountain after mountain, a vast encampment of hills and mountains one behind the other, stretching far away into dim distance, clothed with a wealth of lovely vegetation as far as eye can reach, while all the foreground down to the very water's edge is dark with graceful palm-trees here and there in startling contrast with the sandy shore. Fast fleets this lovely scene; Point de Galle appears in view, glistening white in the morning sun.

A brief stay here, and then on through the Indian Ocean, where thousands of flying-fish break the monotony of the sea-surface, till land once more appears low down on the horizon, and soon dark and dreary-looking Aden looms large in the brilliant sunlight, fourteen hundred feet of black rugged rock without a sign of vegetation.

A few hours, and then again on the wing and away for the Red Sea. Gradually the heat increases, till the deck is strewn night and day with the helpless, almost inanimate, bodies of the passengers, all more or less in a state of collapse. What matter to them that Mocha is to be seen on the starboard side, or Suez on the port bow? What do they care about the passage of the Israelites or Moses' Well? Nothing, absolutely nothing, sir, I assure you!

Suez passed, and in the Canal. A dreary route at first, and winds slowly through many turnings, with sand on either bank as far as eye can reach; but gradually the scene improves: a hamlet, then a ferry over which camels are being conveyed, then a flock of sheep tended by a shepherd whose style of dress is as old as the sand beneath his feet, and so on with some object of ever-varying interest, till it opens out into Lake Jimsah. On again with the first blush of dawn, having made fast to the bank for the night, and ere noon Lake Menzaleh is passed, and the anchor drops at Port Saïd.

A wondrous sight this Lake Menzaleh in the morning sun, its bosom white with countless myriads of birds—herons, flam-

ingoes, dottrel, duck, &c.—while every now and then some vast flock will rise simultaneously to seek a better feeding-place, fly for some few hundred yards *en masse*, till suddenly the cry goes forth 'to halt,' and then bursting like a shell from its centre with dazzling glitter of wings each bird drops softly into the water, reminding one of a lovely snow-storm sweeping down, as bird follows bird in a perfect shower of birds.

Full steam ahead, and ploughing along through the deep blue Mediterranean Sea, the charms of which, if charms they be, are too well known, I ween, to need even a passing word. In due time through varying rough and smooth weather Southampton is reached; and Kavanagh and Graham go their different ways, to meet in London later on, the former having once more reminded Graham of his promise.

CHAPTER II.

'Careless of all—of my love, of me;
Beautiful, proud, and fair to see;
Breaking my heart, while her own
is free.' *Monthly Magazine.*

LONDON; a raw, cold, dismal evening towards the end of November; drizzling rain, and heavy oppressive fog outside, but, O, how comfortable within doors! The scene, a room in a certain military club; Jack Kavanagh lying back in a comfortable arm-chair, trying to fix his attention on a newspaper, but ever and anon glancing towards the fireplace, where stands Charlie Graham, holding forth to a few select friends on the subject of subalterns' grievances, and the enormous advantage of serving her Majesty in the 'far East;' several old members looking very indignant, deeming it sacrilege that any one should dare to speak above a whisper in their august presence, half wondering the walls do not fall in and crush them where they stand as a burst of merriment breaks forth from the group. As the laughter dies away Kavanagh rises and walks towards the group.

'Come along, Charlie; it's gone seven, and hang me if I wait any longer.'

'One moment—good-night, gentlemen; we will renew this most interesting conversation at the earliest opportunity.' And with a mock bow he takes Jack's arm and leads him out of the room.

'Who *is* that good-looking fellow with Graham?' asks one of the group, as the door closes on our two friends. 'I do not remember having seen him before.'

'O, Kavanagh of the —th; he was in the cavalry once, but some girl, a cousin, I think, played the very mischief with him, and he exchanged to a regiment going abroad. He has been away between five and six years.'

Meanwhile the object of their solicitude is rolling along in a hansom towards the Golden Theatre.

'Don't blame me, Jack, if she is not there; I told you she said she most likely would not be able to act to-night,' says Graham.

'All right, old man; you have permission to go behind the scenes any night, have you not?'

'Yes, and to take a friend with me.'

The curtain is up; the first act of the drama named in the programme commences as our two friends take their seats. What the drama? Never mind, it is not a very thrilling one. Kavanagh tries to follow it, but gradually his attention steals away, to wander back through the 'halls of memory.' He is in dreamland. He sees himself a boy again, madly

in love with a beautiful cousin; slowly through the mist of years comes the day he joined his regiment, with her kiss still burning on his lips; six months pass, and he is on his journey home to see his darling again; a few hours gone, and he is sobbing his heart out to find another has stolen the love that was his, and left no sign to soften the blow; tight close his hands, as if on the throat of the man who has wronged him; and then down comes the mist of time, and as it rolls away a softer memory steals across the spirit of his dream: he is present at amateur theatricals given by his regiment ere they embark; there is a girl dressed as a peasant acting; he does not know her, but her face seems to hold him spellbound, while her voice thrills through and through him; the curtain falls, but like one entranced he remains motionless; again deepens the mist, but only for an instant—a cloud across the moon! 'tis gone! and he is on a troopship, fast steaming away from 'merrie England;' but that face is haunting him, that voice ringing in his ears, until he is well-nigh mad.

A sudden burst of applause rouses him. He looks up, and at the same instant, liquid, soft, and low, falls on his ear the voice which even now was ringing in his memory, the voice which so often and often he had heard in his dreams, 'the faint exquisite music of a dream' itself. She is singing low and soft: and liquid stream those notes over the hushed audience, and he listens more like one in a trance than a living man, breathless almost as note after note thrills its way to his heart of hearts; scarcely does he hear Graham's voice as the curtain descends.

'Come along, Jack, as quickly as you can, or you will miss the fair lady.'

Mechanically he follows, much in automaton manner, and in a few moments is in the presence of the girl whose face has haunted him waking and sleeping for five long weary years.

'Miss Lennox, will you give me permission to introduce my dearly beloved brother-in-arms, Jack Kavanagh, lieutenant in H.M. —th regiment of foot? Not a bad fellow, but I fear you will find him rather *triste;* his parents used to beat him, I suspect, in early life, *pauvre enfant!*'

Roused by this nonsense, Jack looks up, and his eyes meet those of Miss Lennox. Then and there, once and for ever, he feels he is face to face with fate. In an instant he is himself again thoroughly.

'Miss Lennox, I deeply appreciate the honour of this introduction; I have looked forward to it for many a day, indeed ever since I first saw you.'

'First saw me, Mr. Kavanagh! When could that have been? I have only acted in London three years, and Mr. Graham tells me you have been abroad as long as he has.'

'Yes, five years; but I saw you at Southsea just before we embarked for foreign service. Perhaps you may remember the private theatricals there.'

'Remember them! Yes, I certainly do; but you were not one of the actors?'

Jack is about to explain that he would willingly have given half the years of his life to have been one of the said actors, when the bell rings, up goes the curtain, and with a pretty graceful inclination of the head she passes him and is on the stage.

He waited and watched, charmed out of himself by her acting, so soft and womanly every turn and gesture, hoping to speak to her

once more that night. But no, it was not to be: he saw her, 'tis true, pass out of the theatre, accompanied by the servant Graham had told him of, and with this, whether he loves her or not, he must be contented for twenty-four hours. Truly Fate is inexorable. Graham has gone. Whither? As well ask the wind where it blows to! And now, as Jack Kavanagh lights a cigar, and strolls slowly homewards, does he commune somewhat seriously with himself. What his thoughts I know not; suddenly he stops, and drives his heel savagely on the pavement.

'No, she can never love me; what is there about me to win any woman's love? I tried once, and failed utterly, miserably; since then I have never cared for any one, never sought any one's love or society save Charlie Graham's. Am I, can I be fool enough to tempt fortune again? No, no! a thousand times no! I will think of it no more.'

Flinging away the end of his cigar he strides rapidly towards the lodgings occupied by Graham and himself, having for the moment cast away all thoughts of Edie Lennox. But, alas, to have thought of her at all, now he knows her, is fatal to his peace of mind; the charm of her presence will not be driven away.

And so next morning, and all through the day, wherever he goes, whatever he does, her presence reigns over him, and evening finds him once more behind the scenes. And now he is often there, and when the new year comes he is still wending his way almost nightly in the direction of the Golden Theatre.

One evening, some months after his introduction, he is at the theatre just before the piece commences, talking to her very earnestly. Any one not wilfully blind might judge from her bright looks how pleasing his society is; indeed, few girls could listen to such a good-looking fellow, speaking so earnestly that every word he breathes is a prayer almost, without a feeling at least akin to love: and she has long since discerned that this is a different manner of man from all other wooers—a man who loves her for her own sweet self, and whose deep manly respect honours her as she has never yet been honoured.

Their conversation is somewhat rudely interrupted by a handsome-looking man, who, without noticing Jack in the least, addresses himself to Miss Lennox.

'Can I speak to you, Miss Lennox? I'—and here he drops his voice so low that Jack cannot even guess at the rest of the sentence.

'Certainly, if Mr. Kavanagh will excuse me for a moment.' He does not hear her, not he; his eyes and attention are riveted on the man who has dared to come between him and a happiness that was of heaven.

'Alone, if you please. I cannot speak before a stranger.'

It is useless to try and catch Kavanagh's attention; and so, with a sad pleasing look in her pretty eyes, she turns away, and in a moment is out of sight. With a half smile on his face, which almost drives Kavanagh out of his senses, her friend follows.

Poor Kavanagh! His first impulse is to call the fellow back, and give him a regular good thrashing; but it does not take an instant for him to see what a false position he would be in if he interfered in any way. What right has he to her society more than any one else? None whatever. She may surely choose her own companions. And then there steals into his mind his old distrust of women; for he, in com-

mon with many other good fellows thrown over by one girl, has believed the whole sex bad; has visited the sins of the *one* on the *many*. And so he leaves the theatre, repenting bitterly that he ever entered it, seeking day after day, in all sorts of dissipations for which he has no taste, to drown the memory of his short-lived happiness. How vain, how utterly useless such attempts do always prove, few, if any, of the countless thousands, men and women, who walk this earth are ignorant.

Tired, sick at heart, with the dreary feeling of an occupation gone, he returns one night to his lodgings, and flinging himself into an arm-chair by the fire he tries to argue with himself quietly. And really what has she done so unforgivable that he has made up his mind not to see her again? Nothing, any outsider would say; but, dear reader, for sins of this sort in the Court of Love there is no appeal; no punishment surely is too severe for 'leaving one gentleman for, and with, another;' O, no, unforgivable, unpardonable! Did he but know that he had hardly left the theatre ere she returned to look for him, I wonder how it would be then?

His meditations are interrupted by Charlie Graham, who comes upstairs three at a time, flings open the door, and roars out,

'Ho, within there! the "Grand Turk" is ready for his evening meal;' and then, catching sight of Jack's gloomy face, bursts into a fit of laughter.

'O my dear old wet blanket! O my soldier's funeral without any music! O my all things miserable and wretched! what *is* the matter now? I haven't seen you for a week; but when I did see you last I should like to have bought you at my price immensely, and sold you at your own. And now, in one short week, here you are "to be sold for nothing;" will be given away, in fact, if a kind master or mistress can be found.'

'My dear Charlie, you say "one short week." I have not seen you for three at least; remember you were a fortnight in the country.'

'Quite right. I suppose you have been fretting for me; that accounts for your gloomy face—accept my very best thanks. I met Lindsay of the —th to-day; he inquired most tenderly after you, and asks you to a dinner-party, small and select, he is giving at Richmond to-morrow. What say you, *mon brave*, "yes" or "no"?'

'Who is one likely to meet there?' says Jack, with an attempt at indifference which even Graham sees through.

'Who is one *likely* to meet? Now why can't you ask me at once if Miss Lennox will be there? I do hate fellows who go beating about the bush; and upon my word I've a great mind not to tell you. However, I want you to go; so prepare yourself for the pleasant announcement that she *will* be there.'

'I accept,' says Jack very slowly; and then murmurs to himself, 'Yes, I will go, and just see if I cannot show her that I am not quite so idiotically in love with her as she no doubt fancies I am by this time; surely at a dinner-party like this there must be some opportunity.'

Curiously happy at the idea of trying to annoy, if not make miserable, the girl he loves best in the world, he quite startles Graham by his sudden change from grave to gay; and when at last he retires to rest, he sleeps more soundly than he has for many a night. Such is the wickedness of the heart of man!

CHAPTER III.

'We call thee hither, entrancing power!
Spirit of love! Spirit of bliss!
The holiest time is the moonlight hour,
And there never was moonlight so sweet as this.' MOORE.

NEXT evening the opportunity he desires offers itself without any seeking on his part: he finds himself seated next a very pretty girl, and Miss Lennox sitting opposite him, with the very man whose head he so longed to knock off that night at the theatre. Since that night he has not seen her, and now he falters in his purpose as he looks at her for an instant. Beautifully dressed, with one lovely flower in her hair and another in her girdle, she could not, even if she had wished to excite Jack Kavanagh's love anew, have heightened her beauty more, or appeared to better effect. He dare not look at her again; and so, turning almost abruptly to his fair partner, he commences that outrageous species of flirtation which is on the borderland of insult to any woman who is worthy of the name; overdoing it more and more, as every one does who tries this method of retaliation, till half the people at the table are laughing at him. He does not notice it, not he; nor does he see those sweet pleading eyes just across the table.

Sick at heart, he sits there after the ladies have retired, playing listlessly with his wine-glass; only too thankful when, at last, the gentlemen rise to join *les dames*. Wishing to be alone he turns abruptly from them, and walks out on to the balcony through an open window, and with eyes bent on the ground moves slowly along, careless alike of the exquisite scene and the lovely moonlight. The moon is up and the sky cloudless, and all who have been to Richmond know full well that the view from a certain hotel under such circumstances is second to none in all the length and breadth of 'merrie England.'

Suddenly, as Kavanagh moves down the balcony, he finds himself face to face with Miss Lennox, who, a moment before, was leaning over the balustrade so absorbed in thought as not to notice his approach until he almost touched her.

Half frightened at his dark gloomy looks, and half angry with him for his conduct while at dinner, she draws herself up, and bowing slightly, tries to pass him.

In an instant he is across her path, with what intention Heaven only knows.

Very pale and sad is that sweet face, as she says,

'Mr. Kavanagh, please let me pass. I can see my father in the room behind you; do not oblige me to call him.'

'Call your father! Why not call that friend of yours, to whom methinks you have sworn allegiance, and for whom no doubt you were waiting here when I disturbed you?'

'Mr. Kavanagh, you have no right to speak to me like this; and I tell you, once for all, I will not hear my friends spoken lightly of by any one.'

And then, dear reader, mad with jealousy, poor Master Jack completely lost his head, and many a bitter thing was said, very hard to forgive, and still harder to forget. He broke abruptly away, and ordering his dog-cart, drove off without saying good-bye or good-night to any one. Had he but looked up ere he drove away he might have seen indistinctly at one of the windows a figure I do not think he could have mistaken—watching; a figure that

did not move till the light from his carriage-lamps was no longer visible.

For days and days after this he wandered about London, angry with her, with himself, with every one; almost cursing people who looked happy, as they passed him in the sunlight; wishing he had never come on leave to England; sinning involuntarily, and wishing himself dead—a thousand times dead.

A few weeks of this, and then—is it natural or not?—he once more bends his steps towards the Golden Theatre.

The curtain has just fallen as he arrives on the stage, and amidst a perfect storm of applause Miss Lennox is led before it by the man he deems his rival. As she returns on the way to her dressing-room she passes close to him, and, far too much a lady to cut him, bows very slightly as she turns to cross the stage.

He makes a movement as if to follow and speak to her, but as he moves a sound falls on his ear that stops him as if a bullet had struck him. Glancing up he sees the danger, and it may well drive all the blood from his face to reinforce the heart. Some of the machinery connected with lifting and lowering the scenes has broken, and one of these with its heavy roller is descending, gathering velocity each instant, utterly free from all restraint. The far end of it is between the very two wings Miss Lennox is just about to enter; another instant and it must strike her dead. She does not even see or hear it; her thoughts are with a certain gentleman she had just passed, wondering whether he intends to ask her forgiveness, and so renew their old pleasant intercourse. Quick as thought he is under it with his hands up, hoping at least to stay it long enough for Miss Lennox to escape the blow; he calls to her without daring to look. Down comes the roller, breaking through his hands on to his head with a dull heavy thud, forcing him down on his knees; and then, strong as he is, almost ere he knows it, he is full length on the stage, with everything swimming round and round him. A tremendous effort and he is on his knees again: but he is hit harder than he thinks; once more he goes down, without the strength to move, and so still does he lie that to all appearance he is dead.

And Miss Lennox—he has saved her life; there is no gainsaying that; the momentary break in its fall as it struck him enabled her to pass out from the wings beyond its reach. Is she sorry or glad to owe her life to him? *Nous verrons.* At all events she is thankful, and there is a nameless something in her manner, as she tries to win him back to consciousness, which tells a tale 'they who run may read.'

It is some months ere he is out and about again; the shock was more severe than was at first thought, and moreover the roller of the scene had badly damaged his right shoulder, having jammed it down on the stage when he fell. During the long dreary time he has had to remain indoors Charlie Graham has been the kindest of kind friends; day and night he has stayed with him, reading, telling ridiculous stories, arguing, and doing anything and everything he can to while away the time, which, always heavy when one is sick, is trebly so when one is in good health, and has to lie up with a damaged limb.

Only once has Charlie named Miss Lennox, for Kavanagh has begged him not to speak of her; and then if Jack had but listened,

he would have heard how, for a long time after the accident, she had either called or sent to ask how he was nearly every day; but he had asked Graham not to mention her name almost directly after he recovered his senses, and so he never knew of these kind attentions.

One morning late in November, almost a year since Graham introduced him to Miss Lennox, he and Charlie are sitting late over breakfast in their lodgings, talking over various things they had intended doing during their leave in England, and which remain to be done now within one month of their departure to rejoin headquarters. Jack is still very weak from his long stay in bed, it being only the second day he has been allowed to go out.

'My dear old man,' says Graham almost abruptly, 'now you are all right again you must return some of the many calls made during your time on the sick-list; amongst others, I bring forward for early notice several made by the Golden Theatre people: *some* of them have been most kind, calling nearly every day until assured you were well out of danger.'

'Have they? Who would you name in particular? Perhaps that friend of Miss Lennox's. Upon my word he ought to, for I believe I saved his head from a crack that would have given him his final "exit" from the stage.'

Now this was just the opportunity Graham wanted.

'Do you know who that fellow is?'

'No; nor do I care to know; he fancies himself too much for me altogether.'

'Well,' says Graham, not heeding the last remark, 'he is acting stage-manager for stage-manager "gone on leave," and has an uncommonly pretty wife.'

'An uncommon what?' says Jack, springing up from his chair.

'Wife! W-i-f-e, wife! A lady who married him, you know—church, clergyman, bridesmaids, wedding-cake, and coachmen extremely tipsy, &c.'

'Are you certain of this?'

'Just as certain as I am that I sit here. A wife and three, four, five lovely screaming children.'

And then Graham tells him in a most casual way, as if it was *most* uninteresting, how often Miss Lennox called to inquire or sent to ask after him while he was ill; how she always was wanting to know when he would be about again that she might thank him, &c.; concluding, as he got up to go out, 'I hope, in the cause of common politeness, you will call and see her. You were not, as far as I remember, very attentive to her before that accident; and considering what tremendous running you made there when I first introduced you, it was rather too bad to throw her acquaintance over so soon. *Au revoir.*'

'Little he knows of the matter,' thinks Jack; 'and yet he is not so very wide of the mark, after all. I have tried to throw over her acquaintance—the acquaintance of a girl I love better than my own life, I truly believe—and for what? For a cause that never at any time—how plainly I see it now!—had ever a ring of truth in it to make me jealous, if only I had not been so madly blinded by love. And so I have wronged her, ever since that night, in a miserable unmanly way; wronged her only too deeply, I fear, for her ever to forgive me again. I can but tell her how sorry I am, and plead for her forgiveness before I leave England; she may not grant it, but methinks it will be the sweetest task I have ever had to perform.'

AT A LITTLE DINNER IN TATTER-STREET.

I.

A STRANGE uneasiness possesses the juvenile population of Golden-lane and of Whitecross-street, and all the threescore-and-ten blind and purblind courts and alleys that, as the tangled meshes of a great net, extend from the City Barbican to Old-street, and from Bunhill-row, Goswell-road. The adult inhabitants appear to be unaffected. The gin-shops of the neighbourhood are, as usual, well attended by the female kind, and their gossip is of nothing extraordinary; while the males of the alley-tribes, who prefer the more substantial comfort of the beer-shop, puff at their short pipes, and drink out of quart-measures with their ordinary air of dull stupidity. No particular animation is visible in the streets. The stall-keepers and the costermongers pursue their ordinary avocations without excitement, and their conversation with their customers is confined to the commonplaces of hard bargain-driving. Now and again a fishwoman in the market-street, chilled to the bones by the bleak wind and the small rain that is falling, will remark to a neighbour, 'What wretched weather!' and the latter, with a shrug of her wet shoulders, will reply, 'Beastly!' and no more is said on the subject; which is the more surprising, because the 'subject'—the weather, that is—is seemingly the main cause of the commotion amongst the youngsters. In the case of those who are most hungry and ragged and miserable-looking, this is particularly observable. They meet in groups at the street-corners and whisper together, and scan the lowering clouds as though some wonderful atmospherical phenomenon were overdue, and the surprise was that it did not appear. Presently a boy of twelve years, perhaps, judging from the worldly-wise expression of his wizened face, but not more than seven or eight, if he is to be judged by his stature (if so, a poor little structure of little more than bones and rags can fairly be so designated), consults his young friends, and then furtively mounts up on to the back of a cart, and so commands a view of the vane on the top of St. Luke's Church. 'Which way is it now, Billy?' is the eager question asked. 'Sou'-west still, blow it!' Billy responds ruefully, climbing down from his perch. There can be no doubt that it was the direction in which the wind was that Billy alluded to; and hearing his report, his companions indorse his opinion in a bleak chorus of 'Blow it!' unaware, possibly, that their commentary was something in the nature of consigning coals to Newcastle. After in this manner easing their overburdened bosoms, they huddle, for warmth's sake, closer still under a convenient archway, and commence and go through a pantomimic performance of a nature to strike with wonder, if not with terror, the chance observer. They thrust out vigorously with both hands clenched and with a downward dip, as though they grasped a fork and knife, and there was a smoking plateful of something

good before them; they raise the phantom implements to their mouths, and make voracious bites at the empty air, and their sharp teeth snap together like a rat-trap that has missed the rat; they champ their jaws until the hinges seem like to chafe through the mere skin that covers them. The ghostly banquet at an end, they join in a dance, out of which Dervishes themselves might gain a wrinkle, and rub their mocked stomachs with both hands. Then they suddenly subside to moody silence again, which lasts until, in a few minutes, there is again a whispering, and again, like Sister Anne, Billy once more climbs up the cart, looking towards St. Luke's steeple for relief. 'How is it now, Billy?' But it is evident from his countenance that the tidings he has are not of comfort and joy; and without waiting an answer to the momentous question, they jerk their towzled heads despairingly, and slouch off in the rain and mire.

II.

The scene is still Golden-lane and its grimy vicinage, but under a different aspect. The vane on the top of St. Luke's steeple has ceased to indicate sou'-west. With rigid determination, and without the least symptom of wavering, its index points nor'-east, and there is snow in the air, snow on the housetops and in the parish churchyard, white as snow should be; snow in the streets and gutters of the hue and consistency of inferior paste-blacking. A terrible day for the poor costermongers and stall-keepers of Whitecross-street. The fishwoman who yesterday stigmatised the weather as beastly, because it drenched her shawl and compelled her to stand in a puddle, could not, unless she sent home for a kettle of hot water and thawed the stubborn ice in the kennel, find a puddle to stand in, though she walked a mile in search of it, and her life depended on it. A day so bitingly bitterly cold that the very turnips and carrots set out in penny lots on the bleak boards looked nipped up and frost-bitten, and would be grateful to any one who would take them home and pop them into a comforting pot of hot soup. Gin fails this morning to be all that is desired by the miserable women who indulge in it at the bars of the Whitecross-street gin-shops. There does not seem to be warmth enough in the fiery liquid to set free the slatternly dram-drinkers' powers of speech, or to alter the leaden hue of their lips. The male loafers at the beer-shops find no comfort in pewter measures—perhaps it is because their pockets are frozen out—and loiter by the lamp-posts, asking each other in dismayed voices how 'long this 'ere is a-goin' to last,' as they stamp their feet and blow on their knuckles, for warmth's sake. The sudden frost seems to have paralysed this neighbourhood of squalor, and everybody is half-benumbed and wretched-looking—except the children. Here they come in a troop—Billy of yesterday and his young friends amongst the number; and though the shoes and boots of the whole party, on account of their ramshackle, would not, if all sold to an old Jew, realise enough money to buy a single new pair, the Dervish dance they performed yesterday was quite a lame performance to what they are equal to this morning. Their jackets and frocks are miserably thin (for there are little girls as well as boys), and flutter in the wind, and in many cases the tiny tatter-

demalions have neither hat nor cap, and their hair is prematurely gray with the snow that lodges in it. But they don't seem to mind it a bit. Mind it! they rejoice and revel in it, and laugh out loud, though their noses are blue, and the breath puffs out white as steam when they open their mouths. They are all going in one direction, it must be remarked—all towards Golden-lane, and to a narrow turning there, at the corner of which there is a great building, which looks like a model lodging-house.

But they are not model lodgers, and they do not live there. They are at present simply going to school. Never were there such diligent scholars or such early ones. The school does not profess to open until nine o'clock; and though the morning is so inclement, and it still lacks full fifteen minutes of that hour, there are a hundred or more of the tiny tag-rag and bobtail of the neighbourhood already gathered about the door. Nobody complains of the cold. Even to the littlest, who wraps her blue arms in her ragged pinafore, they are light-hearted and jovial almost, and talk in eager undertones to each other with big eyes and involuntary clapping of hands, as though some great event were about to happen. Perhaps it is so. Maybe it is the mysterious event for indications of the coming of which Billy yesterday made an observatory of the wood-chopper's cart, and longingly scanned the horizon towards St. Luke's church, with a view to ascertaining which way the wind blew. But no one evinces the least curiosity respecting the way of the wind to-day. Billy certainly does not. He is in so jocose a mood that he has a fancy to contemplate creation from an upside-down point of view, and to this end balances himself on his head in the snow against the school-wall, beating time with his naked feet to the tune of a song, seemingly an extemporaneous one, in which frequently occur the words 'Irish stew.'

'Don't you make so cock-sure of it, Bill Widgery,' croaks a bullet-headed boy, fat and well-fed, and who evidently has recently partaken of an ample breakfast.

'Why not?' Master Widgery asks, stopping abruptly in his cheerful melody.

'Cos you might be dissapinted,' replies the bullet-headed boy, with a malicious relish for the other's dismay; 'because it has always come off on the fust day of freezing, it don't foller that it will this time. *I* don't think it will.'

William Widgery's legs are stricken rigid as wooden legs against the wall, and the ragged hair of his head no longer twirls like a mop on the half-baked snow on which it rests. The wild song, the refrain of which is 'Irish stew! Oh-h, Ii-ar-ish stew-w-w!' dies in his mouth, and with an altogether changed expression of countenance he slowly regains his right way up. Billy is a full head shorter than the bullet-headed boy. Fairly split down the middle, the latter might have represented the bulk of two Billys, with material to spare. There was that, however, in the other's speech which lent to Billy the pluck and spirit of David when he faced the giant Goliath.

'Be fair now, Charley Chowser, and tell us if you have heard anything. *Don't* let a feller go on a hopin' and a hopin', and all for nothing.' And little Widgery approaches the bulky boy, his voice husky with emotion and dismal apprehension, but at the same time

with his fists tightly clenched behind him.

Others besides Billy had heard the bullet-headed boy's remark, and their heart-sinking and consternation was visible in their faces.

'What do yer mean?' laughs Master Chowser, enjoying the fun.

'You just said that you don't think it will come off to-day. Have you heard anythink? Come now.'

'It don't matter to you. P'r'aps I have, and p'r'aps I haven't. I don't care which way it is. But it *do* make me savage, Bill, to see a chap as 'oggish as you are.'

'Never you mind about that!' and Bill's knuckles twitched behind him, and his breath grew shorter. 'Have you heard anythink? that's what I want to know.'

'Well, I haven't heard more than you; but—'

'Then take that for frightening a cove; and not only me, but all these little uns—gals, mind yer—some of 'em what's been looking forward to it, and got a cause to, Charley Chowser, which you haven't.'

And amidst the applause of those whose cause he championed, the fists of the bloodthirsty little Widgery flew at Master Chowser's nose. It was a rash attack, however great the provocation. There was no weight at all in Billy's mites of fists, and the effect of their stinging Chowser's nose was not to draw blood from that flattened organ, but to strike fire out of his eyes.

'Now who's 'oggish?' demanded Billy, still sparring, but evidently a little alarmed for what he was about to catch.

'Hi am!' roared the bullet-headed boy, with frightful emphasis, as he spat on his smutty fists (he carried out coals after school-hours). But happily there was at that moment a cry, 'Here's master! Hooray, here he comes!' and the battle, if battle there was to be, was postponed.

III.

That prophet of evil, Charley Chowser, even though he was never permitted to lay a vengeful fist on Billy Widgery, could not deny that before that morning's school was at an end he had secured to himself ample satisfaction for the assault and battery that had been committed on his person. By means of nods and winks, and all manner of malicious dumb-show, he now affected to be complete master of the mystery, one of the component parts of which, judging from Billy's vague allusions, was Irish stew. Whenever he found opportunity, which was every time the backs of the superintendent and the schoolmaster were turned towards him, did that pitiless imp proceed to goad the boys of his class almost to madness. By signs and motions he made bold to repeat the ominous prediction that had so roused little Widgery's ire. The fat rascal—as before mentioned, he already had partaken of a hearty breakfast, and before he left home for school had seen the prime piece of salt beef that was to be boiled for the family dinner—now went beyond, forming with his lips those spirit-damping words, 'Don't be too cock-sure.' He stealthily drew on his slate a schoolroom full of skeletons—chief amongst which, and to be identified by the odd boot and shoe in which its leg-bones were incased, was Billy Widgery—all seated on forms, with empty plates on their laps, their ghastly eye-orbits turned towards the master's desk, their

grisly jaws ajar in famished expectancy; and there was the master 'making a sight' at them all with his outstretched fingers at his nose, while proceeding from his lips came the mocking words, 'Don't you wish you may get it!'

Get what? There is no reason, at all events, why the reader should be kept longer in suspense, if the ragged scholars of the Lane of Gold are. The prosaical fact is this: The superintendent of this school in the slums, Mr. William Orsman by name, amongst the score or so of substantial blessings he has been instrumental in conferring on the legion of alley-dwellers that live round about these his headquarters, is one of rather a novel kind, and which could only have originated in the mind of a man who had taken deeply to heart the teaching of his Master, 'Love little children.' 'Let me consider,' one can well imagine this Christian gentleman pondering the matter; 'what else can I do towards smoothing the stony road these poor folk are fated to travel? I have successfully founded all manner of clubs, amongst them being a money-saving club—a club by means of which a barrow-man may speedily become the owner of the vehicle he uses, instead of paying eighteenpence a week for it; and a club on which they may draw in times of sickness. I have by degrees weaned scores of them from being coarse brutal drunkards to become sober and decent members of society, and have stirred the charity of the benevolent in their interest, so that their sick and helplessly aged need not go hungry. I have a fund for supplying them with coals in the cold weather at market price. What else can be done?' I think that he must have asked himself the question one wintry day—just such a one as that on which Bill Widgery smote the nose of the tantalising coal-boy—when his schoolful of poor little shivering scholars was about to be dismissed from morning attendance, and it occurred to him that to a certainty, in nine cases out of ten, 'going home to dinner,' even in that bleak weather, was a mere empty form, and meant at best nothing more than a lump of dry bread, of limited dimensions, or perhaps two or three hot potatoes. 'If I could only secure to the hungry little creatures a good, hot, satisfying dinner once or twice a week,' said good Mr. Orsman to himself, 'what a lot of comfort they would get out of it! What would it cost to give a hundred of them an Irish-stew dinner?' A little pencilling soon settles that part of the business, and the result was that one bitterly cold day the experiment was tried. It was such an enormous success that, as the theatre people say, 'hundreds were turned away from the doors,' which must have been a much more pitiful sight for the kind-hearted provider of the feast looking out at the window than for the theatrical manager. But a repetition of the entertainment was announced, and this time double the number of guests were invited; and so the glorious institution grew, until it has come to this, that somehow or another—for Mr. Orsman seldom has a week's poor children's dinner-money in hand—in a vulgar manner of speaking, 'the pot has been kept boiling' ever since, during frosty months, and twice, even three times, a week at what are known as 'God-send' times—*i.e.* when an unexpected donation for this express purpose finds its way to the hands of the treasurer—*three hundred* of the ill-clad, half-fed small fry of the neighbourhood are as bountifully fed as was that other host,

whose meal consisted of miraculous loaves and fishes.

The system has been if possible to make a start at the first appearance of frost or snow, which will sufficiently account for the anxiety of Billy Widgery and his dinnerless young friends that the wind should change from a wet quarter, and give place to that deliciously keen blast that brought with it the aroma of beef and mutton, bubbling in a seething caldron with all manner of vegetables.

It was on this last-mentioned point that opinion was so much divided on the occasion in question. It was a rule to make no mention of the preparing banquet until dinner-time; but, as a rule, it betrayed itself. The kitchen, though apart from the schoolhouse, was not so very far off, and hungry children have keen noses. Ten o'clock—half-past. If incessant 'sniffing' is symptomatic of impending cold in the head, there was not one of the whole number but would be in a bad way to-morrow. Charley Chowser sniffs derisively, and affects to sneeze at the powerful odour of cooked meat that tickles his nostrils.

A quarter to eleven—eleven o'clock; and hope grows faint in the bosom of even the most sanguine. Once, and once only, had there been a sign of promise—an indirect sign, it is true; but it is proverbial that the drowning catch at straws. Polly Nagle upset her ink-bottle, whereon the schoolmaster called out to her: 'If you are not more careful, miss, you may have reason to be sorry.' Of course there may have been nothing in the words bearing on the burning subject; but at the moment they were eagerly caught at and fondly construed as an intimation to Polly that the time for her to commence being sorry would be dinner-time. But, alas, nothing further came of it!

Presently, however, hope was a-tiptoe again. When mariners have lain long becalmed, it is said that they are by some unknown means made aware of the coming breeze before even the tiniest breath of it has stirred the limp sails. Sniff, sniff! The hungry hundred, halting between hope and fear, eye each other askance, and gather courage from the lowering brow of Chowser. Surely that was a whiff from the kitchen! Another minute and the malignant boy with the bullet-head was completely discomforted. Had there been a door inadvertently opened, or had it been set ajar by the master's private instructions? There could no longer exist any question about it, at all events. Irish stew, undoubtedly! The cold air was fragrant with the delicious aroma, and with one final sniff, grateful and prolonged, the happy hundred settle down comfortably to their spelling lesson.

IV.

The banquet, however, was not merely for one hundred guests, it was for three hundred. As the kind-hearted founder of the feast well knew, there were little brothers and sisters at home in many instances too young to come to school at present, but quite old enough to be painfully familiar with the sensation of hunger and to appreciate the blissful feelings a good hot dinner brings. The worthy superintendent knows all these little ones as well as a careful farmer's wife knows the chicks in the poultry-yard, and it is no trouble to him or his assistant to specify to the scholars as they gleefully pass out who they are

at liberty to bring back with them. 'But why send them home at all when it would be just as easy to despatch a few messengers to fetch the remainder of the guests?' the reader may ask. For the very good reason that there is no such thing as a dinner-service to feast three hundred on the Golden-lane premises; and the rule is, that those who would eat must provide themselves with a knife or a spoon and some kind of vessel to eat out of. They are expected back in a half-hour, and lo, they come, punctual to the minute, you may depend. Did the picture have no other side but its ludicrous one, it would make the fortune of any person who could introduce into a Christmas pantomime that comical procession of little Jack Rag's dinner-party, the guests bearing their own appurtenances to the dining-table: plates were the exception, saucers, gallipots, basins, jugs, jars, covers of vegetable-dishes, lids of tureens, soap-dishes, tin dishes out of Dutch-ovens, shaving-pots, saucepan-lids even. It did not matter in the least. The dinner was the thing.

And there was the dinner all ready. Those guests who were the first to get in occupied the forms; the later comers swarmed over the platform or squatted on the floor. The youngest children of all were thus disposed of, which made it convenient for little sisters, turned mothers of ten years old or so, to gather about her the younger progeny of the family—her three or four friends, including sometimes a baby in arms, all eating out of one great dish or small brown pan, with but one spoon amongst them, which was judiciously wielded by the presiding genius. All seated, and then in comes the Irish stew! Rough and ready; for there is no help for that. Money is a precious commodity at this establishment, and it would be bad economy to provide tablecloths and waiters, and to cut down the dinner-party from three hundred to two hundred and fifty. To provide plenty is the main thing; and surely plenty there is. That copper in the kitchen is big enough to hold the renowned Jack the Giant-Killer and at least two of his seven brothers—they used to depict them as being very small in the pictures of the book when I was a juvenile—and it is brimming full. It is turned out in great cans, and the three or four helpers go rapidly about and fill the vessels of the guests as they sit. It is excellent stew. I tasted a little, and I then tested, with a relish, quite enough to fortify me against the nipping frost, when the time came for me to take my departure. But if I found it good, how did *they* find it? They might possibly, had they been in calm possession of their senses, have been able to find words to express their opinion on the matter; but they were far too deeply engaged to talk. Now and again, when the whole company were at full swing, might be heard a voluntary ejaculation addressed to no one, but merely uttered in the full satisfaction of the soul. 'Ain't it stunning!' 'Don't it warm yer!' &c.; but, bating these sounds, nothing was heard but the clinking of knives and spoons against tin or crockeryware, the smacking of lips, and the tremulous suspirations of those who were impatient to 'get on' rather faster than the heat of their plateful would at present permit. Plates, bowls, platters, and pans were emptied, filled again, and once more emptied with stint, until the room was foggy with the steam of the savoury meal. As I have already

remarked, it was rough and ready, and scarcely the kind of 'spread' one would set a child down to if the chief object was to teach it 'manners' at the dinner-table. But I can say this much, that even at the Mansion House, where the Lord Mayor's state-dinner is so magnificently laid out, I have failed to derive so much real enjoyment as the contemplation of that banquet of Irish stew afforded me. It was worth almost any money to observe the gradual banishment of the expression of almost wolfish voracity from the eyes of the most ravenous of the boys, until the serene and placid 'Had quite enough, thanky,' look took its place; while one and all, the dinner at an end, as they rose and sang their simple grace, appeared so much the better for what they had received, that it was no wonder that they were, as they declared themselves to be, 'truly thankful.'

And now, as a parting word, what does the good reader suppose was the sum it cost to make three hundred poor children so supremely happy on a cold winter's day? FIFTY SHILLINGS! It is a fact. Any benevolently-disposed lady or gentleman may test the accuracy of my statement for this sum.

CHARLES SUMNER'S LETTERS.*

The Honourable Edward Pierrepont, Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States to the Court of St. James's, two hours after his arrival in London—that is, on the 4th of July 1876—was called upon to assist at the banquet celebrating the 'Centennial of American Independence;' and in proposing the sentiment, 'The progress of science, art, and literature of the Anglo-Saxon race,' he said that it was much easier for an American to understand the British statesman than for the British statesman to understand the Americans. The reason given was that the statesmen of England wrote books, which the Americans never did. The present Premier had written *Vivian Grey* and *Lothair*, and it was easy to understand his views in regard to America; while another had translated Homer, and it was as easy to understand his views regarding colonies. This statement about the abstention of American statesmen from literary production was gracefully challenged by a contemporary, who pointed out the exceptions which might be cited against each of the parts of Mr. Pierrepont's double proposition. It was quite true that the late Lord Derby translated Homer, that Lord Russell wrote *Don Carlos*, and Lord Beaconsfield *Lothair*, that Mr. Gladstone was a voluminous author, and that the Duke of Argyll and the Marquis of Salisbury had both dabbled in literature. Going back to the past, it could not fail to be remembered that Lord Chesterfield was a wit among lords, and a lord among wits; that Charles James Fox began a history of the Stuarts; that George Canning was the pillar of the *Anti-Jacobin;* and that even the austere William Pitt condescended to add at least one stanza to the immortal ditty of the *U-niversity of Gottingen.* But reverting to modern times, and bearing in mind Palmerston's slight contribution to the *New Whig Guide*, and Brougham's contributions to everything, what literary performances could be laid at the doors of the great Sir Robert Peel, of Lord Aberdeen, of Lord Granville, or indeed of a host of English politicians in every way qualified to claim the rank of statesmen? The Presidents and the leading statesmen of America had, almost without exception, been lawyers or soldiers; and soldiers and lawyers were not much given to writing books, save on purely professional subjects. Mr. Lincoln, although so witty, did not leave behind him so much as a revised edition of Joe Miller; and the world had not up to that time been favoured—a want since then partially made good in this hemisphere—with a manual of laconics or a treatise on silence from the pen of General Grant. On the other hand, literary merit of the very highest order had frequently been a conspicuous characteristic of American diplomatists, amongst whom might be

* *Memoir and Letters of Charles Sumner.* By Edward L. Pierce. 2 vols. (Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington.)

mentioned the great names of Benjamin Franklin, George Bancroft, Washington Irving, Winthrop Motley, and Bayard Taylor. The worst wish to be expressed with regard to Mr. Pierrepont was that he might live to refute his own theory; and that, while approving himself a wise and politic statesman in adjusting any little difficulties which, during his stay in this country, might arise between his Government and our own, he would eventually write a book on England and her institutions as entertaining and as trustworthy as that penned fifty years ago by another Minister to the Court of St. James's, the accomplished and high-minded Richard Rush.

The name thus honourably introduced is that of the author, *inter alia*, of a *Residence at the Court of London from* 1817 *to* 1825, the first edition of which appeared in 1833 both in America and in England; whilst a third edition was published in 1872, with annotations by his son, Benjamin Rush, who was Secretary of the United States Legation in London from 1837 to 1841, and who further edited in 1873 Richard Rush's *Court of London from* 1819 *to* 1825: *with Subsequent Occasional Productions, now first published in Europe.* It was the aim of Mr. Rush to cultivate and preserve the best relations between England and the United States; in this policy exhibiting an enlightened view of diplomatic duties which has so happily dominated most of the lives of American diplomatists who have in this country represented their own. Of Mr. Rush as an observer and chronicler of what he observed it may be said that there are two things of which his descendants feel they have a right to be proud. 'Never, that they are aware, has any of his statements been called in question; and with all his appreciation of England, her solid glory, the durable foundations of her greatness, and her historic renown, together with his high estimate of her people, amongst whom he lived so long and mixed so largely, never for one moment did he fail in his superior duty to the land of his birth and his allegiance.' Giving occasionally in the unreserve of domestic or friendly correspondence his experience, not only of London society in town, but also of the same society when relaxing or bracing itself in country duties and hospitalities, Mr. Rush was ever very guarded in touching with his pen upon scenes and topics of private significance, peremptorily restraining himself whenever his admiration for the individual and national characteristics of the social system of England might have placed him in danger of violating by publicity what he severely chose to regard as sacred and confidential.

The Honourable Charles Sumner—a lawyer, statesman, and sometime sojourner in Europe (1837-40), where he never held any public appointment—had for this country the same keen, kindly, and qualified appreciation which was entertained for it by Mr. Rush, the official representative of the United States; and he likewise shared that Minister's subtle and refined perception of what was gracious in speech or honourable in reticence. In this last particular, however, it may be said that Mr. Sumner placed his taste and judgment in commission; for the publication before us is posthumous, and the responsibility of alternative publication or suppression is distributed amongst three of his surviving friends, who have acted

under the authority conferred upon them by the first article of Mr. Sumner's will: 'I bequeath to Henry W. Longfellow, Francis V. Balch, and Edward L. Pierce, as trustees, all my papers, manuscripts, and letter-books, to do with them what they think best; with power to destroy them, to deposit them in some public library, or to make extracts from them for publication.' With the facilities afforded by this trust, and the aid of Mr. Sumner's early friends, who have kindly contributed their recollections of him and such letters as they had preserved, the biographer, who is Mr. Pierce, the last named of the above trustees, has prepared two volumes of the *Memoir and Letters of Charles Sumner*, for the period closing with the oration on the *True Grandeur of Nations*, July 4, 1845, which is the first production included in the edition of his *Works* as revised by himself, and marks the beginning of his public career. The two volumes which we owe at present to the care and ability of Mr. Pierce are only an instalment of what we are in the long-run to expect from his friendly labours.

Mr. Sumner, we have said, was a lawyer, and we might further say that law to him was a love and a life. But by a happy versatility he was almost equally a man of society—to what extent, indeed, has only now been partially revealed; for, although his *Complete Works*, edited, with a Life, by the Hon. Charles A. Phelps, in ten volumes, have for some time been before the world, this production necessarily lacked to a great extent the piquancy of his lately recovered correspondence. As his *Letters*, as collected by Mr. Pierce, are in an important sense the newest of his productions, as well as the productions most suited to our purpose of the exhibition of social characteristics, it will be chiefly with them that the extracts we propose to make will be conversant. Further, we shall generally narrow the area of our selections to those passages which depict the peculiarities of men who were amongst the foremost in these islands when Mr. Sumner paid them a visit between thirty and forty years ago. The *Letters*, however, are to be remembered as the autobiographic element in a couple of volumes, the burden of which—as that of others to follow—is a *Memoir* of Mr. Sumner; and it will be well to conform to the order of chronology thus suggested, and in the first place to set forth a few of the leading facts in the life, and especially the earlier life, of the honourable gentleman.

Let us, before all, introduce him in terms the probability of which is fully borne out by the manly and decided portraits which adorn respectively the first and second volumes of the *Memoir and Letters*. 'In manner and deportment Mr. Sumner had the stamp of a refined and high-toned gentleman. His figure was commanding, his courage bespoke an intrepid spirit; his voice in debate was deep yet melodious; and he stood among the chosen of the land, a man formed for leadership, esteemed and respected even by those who feared him most. A man of vast acquirements, high ability, distinguished services to humanity, large experience in public affairs, his fame was more than national. As scholar, statesman, and philanthropist, he was known in all civilised lands, and was everywhere regarded as an honour to his country. There are no American statesmen better known or more highly esteemed in England than Charles Sumner and Charles

Francis Adams. About two years after Mr. Sumner's visit to England in 1837 the *Quarterly Review* said of him: "He presents in his own person a decisive proof that an American gentleman, without any official rank or wide-spread reputation, by mere dint of courtesy, candour, an appreciating spirit, and a cultivated mind, may be received on a perfect footing of equality in the best circles, social, political, and intellectual; which, be it observed, are hopelessly inaccessible to the itinerant note-taker, who never gets beyond the outskirts of the show-houses. The purity of Mr. Sumner's character would alone cause him to be remembered gratefully by his country. No breath of suspicion ever touched him. In an age when corruption too often enters into public life, Mr. Sumner preserved his character free from all reproach. He was never involved in any discreditable scheme; he had nothing to fear from 'disclosures' or 'investigations.' He was absolutely proof against the evil influences of Washington; he seldom asked for an office for any man, and never took a part in underhanded intrigues. His example in this respect is one of inestimable value to younger men who are entering the field of politics. There are not too many like him in any age or country, and he could ill be spared from the councils of the nation at a time when the standard of public life is not being very perceptibly elevated, and when 'Butlerism' threatens to take the place of statesmanship."' The above estimate of Mr. Sumner's character appeared in the *New York Times* just after his death; which, we may say in advance of Mr. Pierce's volumes, took place on the 11th of March 1874, from a disease said to be traced by his physicians to the effects of the historic blow struck in the Senate in 1856 by Preston S. Brooks, a member from South Carolina. At the time of his death Mr. Sumner was something over sixty-three years of age, having been born, as one of 'the eldest and twin children of Charles Pinckney and Relief Sumner,' in Boston, on the 6th of January 1811.

The Sumner family is of English origin, and in its fulness of duty to the nation gave to the last generation two worthy brothers, who were respectively Bishop of Winchester and Archbishop of Canterbury.

The name, Mr. Pierce daringly tells us, undeterred by the sinister immortality of the Sompnour of the *Canterbury Tales*, was at first Summoner or Somner—the title of officers whose duty it was to summon parties into courts, especially ecclesiastical courts. The ancestor from whom in the seventh generation Mr. Sumner descended was a native of Bicester in Oxfordshire, whence he emigrated about 1635, with his wife and three sons, to Dorchester, Massachusetts, and became the founder of an American family now widely spread. The ancestry of Mr. Sumner is illustrated by a succession of worthy and useful soldiers and citizens; and his father, who was a distinguished student and graduate of Harvard College (1792-96), and afterwards devoted himself to law and politics, was a prominent defender of Mr. Jefferson's administration, and an influential member of the Republican or Democratic party. Later still, as Sheriff Sumner, he was known for his varied energy and philanthropy. His more distinguished son, Charles Sumner, after qualifying himself by preliminary training, proceeded in August 1821 to the Boston Latin School, the exten-

sive classical course of which extended over a period of five years. Here he gained several honours, and acquired a reputation for learning of the more recondite order; and he quitted the school to pursue his studies as a freshman in Harvard College on the 1st September 1826. His memory was good and *sympathetic*: 'he stood amongst the first in forensics, and in history and *belles lettres* he was also amongst the foremost;' but 'he entirely failed in mathematics.' He affected greatly the old English authors; his life was irreproachable; and he seems to have made himself obnoxious to college discipline no further than for the half-jocular breach of a sumptuary law which prescribed the proper colours of a student's waistcoat. He generally confined his athletic exercises to those of the intellectual arena; but he was habituated to endurance by travel and foot excursions, during which he minutely observed everything as he went—farms, fences, crops, style of buildings, landscapes, canals, and trade. After his graduation in 1830 he passed a year at his father's house in private and rather desultory study; and then, September 1st, 1831, joined the Law School of Harvard University, at the head of which was Mr. Justice Story, the author of the celebrated treatise entitled the *Conflict of Laws*, whose character as jurist and teacher, whose immense learning, copious speech, and great enthusiasm have been often commemorated. Judge Story became his friend, and predicted the future distinction and success of Mr. Sumner, who now began to write on professional subjects in legal journals; and having been admitted to the bar in 1834 presently found himself in possession of a satisfactory and increasing practice. In January 1835 he began to give instruction in the Law School in the place of Judge Story, who was absent at Washington on official duty, and who about this time appointed Sumner reporter of his opinions in the Circuit Court. He also assisted Professor Greenleaf in preparing the General Digest of his *Reports of the Decisions of the Supreme Court of Maine*, and prepared the indexes to the two volumes of Story's *Equity Jurisprudence*. In the midst of professional, political, literary, and social activity he determined to visit the Old World, where he had already secured many friends in advance by correspondence. He left America in December 1837, armed with introductions to many persons of distinction in rank, law, and literature.

'His purpose differed from that of an ordinary tourist, who seeks only relaxation from business, relief from the *ennui* of an idle life, and a view, grateful to the eye, of scenery, costumes, galleries, spectacles. He desired to see society in all its forms; to converse with men of all characters and representatives of all professions; to study institutions and laws, and to acquaint himself with courts and parliaments. He had read many books, and wished to see the men who wrote them, and the men whose deeds they commemorated. The poem, the speech, the history, the judical opinion, and the treatise would, he felt, after such communion, charm with a new interest or light up with a clearer intelligence. He had read foreign law, and he aspired to comprehend fully its doctrines and spirit by attending its schools and observing its administration, with the view of using such knowledge in efforts to improve our own. To his cherished ideal—the *jurist*, whether serving as lawyer, judge, or teacher—he had been loyal as well in practice as when a student; and it was his purpose, after the further studies and wider observations abroad which he deemed essential to its attainment, to return to his profession better equipped for all its duties. He craved the faculty of reading and speaking foreign languages, and sought the opportunity of learning them, not merely from the drill of professional teachers, but as well from the lips of those whose words, written or spoken, had taught mankind.

He had not striven for social consideration at home, and had no expecta-

tion of that which awaited him abroad. But for a tour of the kind which he had in mind letters of introduction were essential; and like Milton two centuries before, he had friends to supply them who were not less kindly than those now best remembered for their good offices to the pilgrim poet.

Mr. Daveis commended him to Earl Fitzwilliam and Lord Jeffrey, both having volunteered to receive any of his friends whom he might be pleased to introduce to them, and also to Lord Denman and others, with whom he was on less familiar terms. Mr. Rand gave him letters to Lord Denman, Baron Parke, and Solicitor-General Rolfe; Judge Story to Mr. Justice Vaughan and John Stuart Wortley; John Neal to Mrs. Sarah Austin; Washington Allston to Wordsworth; Ralph Waldo Emerson to Carlyle; Professor Parker Cleaveland, of Bowdoin College, to Sir David Brewster; Dr. Channing to the Baron de Gérando. Dr. Lieber did his utmost to make his journey agreeable at the time and permanently improving, warmly certifying of his character and acquisitions to continental jurists and *savans*,—notably Mittermaier and the younger Thibaut, as well as to his English friends. Such letters are keys useful for opening doors: but there, as many by experience know, their service ends; after that, he who bears them must, by his manners and gifts, vindicate his title to continued hospitality.'

On the 28th of December Mr. Sumner arrived at Havre, where he found 'antiquity staring at him from every side;' and he reached Paris before the end of the year. Here he made it his business to acquaint himself with the schools and the courts of law, and every variety of legal procedure; but that he did not allow these entirely to absorb him is to be inferred from the following entry in his diary, under date January 12, 1838:

'This evening went to the Théâtre Odéon to see Molière's *Les Femmes Savantes*, and Mademoiselle Mars in the part of Henriette; and the evening was a feast. I had previously prepared myself by reading the play, and I also carried a copy with me, by means of which I followed the actors easily through the whole of this brilliant production. Mars is now nearly sixty, and yet she had the appearance of thirty. Her voice was clear as silver and exquisitely modulated, and her movements on the stage thoroughly graceful. I have seen no performance, by any actor, which was so eminently pretty and graceful as that of this evening by Mars: the part did not call out those stronger traits which she is said to possess. The poetry of Molière fell from her lips with honeyed accents, and all the players did well; there was nothing bad. After this play, Mars appeared in a pretty little piece called *Le Château de ma Nièce*. The theatre of the Odéon is situated in the region of the students, and the *parterre* or pit was, of course, crowded with these. They ranged from the ages of sixteen or seventeen to twenty-one or twenty-two, and like American students were noisy and uproarious, crying to the orchestra for the Marseilles Hymn, &c. While looking at them ranged in rows in the pit, I might have mistaken them for Cantabs, if the sounds of French from all quarters, penetrating my ear, had not keenly reminded me that I was not in my own country. Mademoiselle Mars was, I should think, rather under the common height, and of a neat and beautiful figure. Her eyes were brilliant; and her teeth, hair, and bust all good,—though nobody can tell what of these is the gift of God, or of the dentist or milliner. The theatre of the Odéon is very pretty.'

Some entries in the same diary are, however, more serious. For example:

'January 16 (Tuesday). To-day I enjoyed a treat at the Sorbonne and at the College of France. I heard at the former Jouffroy, well known through the world for his writings on philosophy and international law; and at the latter Lerminier, a man of different character, but of considerable celebrity as an author, and great popularity as a lecturer. Jouffroy is now a distinguished member of the Chamber of Deputies, and during the last week made an able speech in that body. He lectured in the same room in which I had already heard Lenormant and Fauriel. The room was crowded before he entered with young and old, who appeared to be watching eagerly for his appearance, and who broke into applause when he was seen advancing to the desk. He was tall, with a slight stoop in his shoulders, and appeared to be about forty-five or forty-eight years old. His hair was thin, and was suffered to grow long on the back of his head, so as to cover the collar of his coat. His eye was mild but striking; and, together with the pallid countenance, showed the student. Like all the professors, he sat while lecturing. He had neither volume nor notes of any kind before him. His subject was generally philosophy, and to-day he was presenting a tableau of the principal faculties of the human mind. So far as I could understand him, with my poor French ear, he presented a beautiful view of the subject. His language was close and precise, and yet fluent, elegant, and animated. His voice was soft and well managed; his gestures frequent and graceful. His own

interest in the subject seemed to be great. When he closed there was considerable applause. I have seldom, if ever, heard a lecturer who pleased me more than Jouffroy.'

Other sketches of professors, philosophers, and *littérateurs* follow, all of which are put aside in order to give prominence to one of Victor Cousin, whose writings on morals and metaphysics have been studied in all civilised countries:

'March 9, 1838. Assisted about law-papers; called on M. Erard, who invited me to dine with him on Sunday next. Visited Foelix, and examined his library; with most of the books on French law I am already more or less acquainted. Next tried to find Tocqueville, but he has left the city; returned to my room, and was in *déshabillé*, preparing to go out to dine with a French lawyer, when my door opened, and a gentleman in black, of about the middle size, rather thin, with sharp black eyes, black hair brushed smoothly, entered the room. He announced himself as M. Cousin. I offered him a chair, and he was good enough to sit with me for more than an hour. He inquired after Mr. Henry, Mr. Ripley, Mr. Brooks, Mr. Bancroft, but particularly Mr. Brownson; of the latter he spoke as a man of a great deal of talent, and indeed as a most remarkable person. He had received the *brochure* of Mr. Brownson, lately published. Mr. Ripley he described as a man of talent and great activity of mind; Mr. Brooks as a man of enthusiasm; and Mr. Henry as a person he hoped would soon be established in another professorship. His interest in Mr. Brownson appears to be unfeignedly great. I mentioned Dr. Channing's name, and he simply said, in his measured manner, "*C'est un homme bien respectable.*" He spoke at considerable length of his interest in the subject of education, and I cannot but confess that he was eloquent beyond most men whom I have met. He avowed his entire devotion to this cause, and his faith in its paramount importance; that other causes admitted, perhaps, of two sides; that this did not; that it was one in support of which all persons could unite. It might be otherwise, he said, with slavery. He did not wish office from Government, he said; but simply to devote himself to the great cause of education. In avowing this dedication of his life he used language as elevated as the sentiment itself. He appeared very well informed with regard to the United States, and even with regard to the present proceedings in Massachusetts on the subject. I described to him Mann's labours and character; he seemed grateful to hear of them, and asked particularly about Mr. Mann. He spoke of his own recent work on Holland, which he seemed very much to desire might reach the United States; he added that there was a vast similarity between the institutions of the United States and those of Holland. His manner of conversation was ardent, almost burning, with a great deal of emphasis and a loud voice; his sentences, nevertheless, were quite measured. He does not speak English. He did not appear amiable; and, though he spent upwards of an hour with me, his countenance and manner did not once assume an appearance of liveliness and gaiety; it was sombreness that prevailed throughout. I must add that, though he stands high at present, being a peer of France and a man of great talents, he does not appear to be a favourite with any party; it is surmised that he is selfish and loves money. He told me that his translation of Plato had proceeded to the eleventh volume which was already published, and that he was now engaged upon the twelfth. He concluded his visit by inviting me to visit him at his "cabin" at the Sorbonne.'

Mr. Sumner left Paris for London on May 29, 1838, having remained nearly two months longer than he had intended before leaving home. As he himself states in his letters and journal, he left much unseen, and regretted that he could not prolong his sojourn, particularly with the view of conversing with eminent French jurists. He had, however, accomplished what he most desired. He was able to speak the French language, and through it to come into personal relations with educated Europeans of whatever country.

'Sumner arrived in London on the evening of May 31, and remained in England nearly ten months. He came by the way of the Thames, and was a guest temporarily at the Tavistock Inn, Covent Garden. He soon took permanent lodgings at 2 Vigo-street, near Charing Cross and the Strand, and within ten minutes' walk of Westminster Hall and the Abbey. Leaving cards with Earl Fitzwilliam, John Stuart Wortley, and Mr. Justice Vaughan, he soon found himself embarrassed by conflicting invitations, and his time taken up by society. He was admitted as foreign visitor—a qualified membership—to four clubs: the Garrick, Alfred, Travellers', and Athenæum. He was present in court dress at the coronation of Queen Victoria in the Abbey, receiving the courtesy of two tickets,—one from Lord Lansdowne and

the other from Sir Charles Vaughan. He attended the sessions of the courts and the debates in Parliament, reserving till the London season was over the remarkable sights,—the Tower, Tunnel, British Museum, and Abbey. He sat on the bench at Westminster Hall, and dined with the judges at the Old Bailey, where he spoke at the call of the Lord Mayor. Following the plan of his journey, he observed with the keenest interest "men, society, courts, and Parliament."

Having been invited to many country seats, he was well provided with facilities for visiting different parts of England, as also of Scotland and Ireland. He left London, July 24, to attend, by invitation of the judges, the circuits, and to visit places of interest on the way. His route was from London to Guilford, where Lord Denman was holding the Home Circuit, Winchester, Salisbury, Exeter, and Bodmin in Cornwall, where the Western Circuit was then in session, and where, with Wilde and Follett, he was the guest of the bar; then to Plymouth in the carriage of Crowder, Queen's counsel, afterwards judge; to Combe Florey, where he was for two days the guest of Sydney Smith; to Wells, where he met the Western Circuit again, Bristol and Cheltenham; to Chester, where Mr. Justice Vaughan, then holding court, called him to his side upon the bench; and reaching Liverpool Aug. 11, 'during the Northern Circuit, where he met with the same courtesy from Baron Alderson. He dined with the bar and the court, and responded to toasts at Bodmin, and more at length at Liverpool. To Judge Story he wrote, Aug. 18: "Never did I enjoy so much happiness as has been my lot within the last few weeks. I have had a constant succession of kindnesses and attentions of the most gratifying character." To Mr. Daveis he wrote, Sept. 2: "At times I was honoured with a seat on the bench by the side of the judge, and at times I mingled with the barristers. I have made myself master of English practice and English circuit-life. I cannot sufficiently express my admiration of the heartiness and cordiality which pervade all the English bar. They are truly a band of brothers, and I have been received among them as one of them." . . .

While in London, or journeying in other parts of the British Islands, he mingled with the best society. His associations were not confined to any one set, but embraced persons widely divergent in professional callings, politics, tone of thought, and rank,—judges, lawyers, and divines; scholars eminent in literature, metaphysics, and science; titled persons who combined good breeding and intelligence; statesmen, Whig, Tory, and Radical, some of whom were aged, and full of reminiscences of great orators; women, whose learning, cleverness, or grace enriched the thought and embellished the society of their day. He was received as a guest, sometimes with the familiarity of a kinsman, into the houses of Denman, Vaughan, Parke, Alderson, Langdale, and Coltman, among judges; of Follett, Rolfe (Lord Cranworth), Wilde, Crowder, Lushington, and D'Oyly, among lawyers; of Hayward, Adolphus, Clark, Bingham, Wills, Theobald, Starkie, and Professor Bell, among law-writers and reporters; of Hallam, Parkes, Senior, Grote, Jeffrey, Murray, Carlyle, Rogers, Talfourd, Whewell, and Babbage, among men of learning, culture, and science; of Maltby, Milman, and Sydney Smith, among divines; of Robert Ingham, John Kenyon, Monkton Milnes (Lord Houghton), Basil Montagu, and Chas. Vaughan, among genial friends who wrote or loved good books; of Brougham, Durham, Inglis, Cornewall Lewis, Campbell, Labouchere, Hume, and Roebuck, among statesmen and parliamentary chiefs; of Fitzwilliam, Lansdowne, Wharncliffe (and his son, John Stuart Wortley), Leicester, Holland, Carlisle (and his son, Lord Morpeth), among noblemen. He met on a familiar footing Charles Austin, Macaulay, Landor, Leigh Hunt, Thomas Campbell, and Theodore Hook. He talked with Wordsworth at his home, and looked with him on the landscapes which had inspired his verse. Among women to whose society he was admitted were the Duchess of Sutherland, Mrs. Montagu, Joanna Baillie, Mrs. Jameson, Mrs. Sarah Austin, Miss Martineau, Mrs. Shelley, Mrs. Marcet, Mrs. Grote, Lady Morgan, Mrs. Norton, and Lady Blessington. With some of these persons the acquaintance was only temporary; with others there followed a correspondence more or less frequent, and a renewal of intercourse in later visits to Europe; and there were those, like Lord Morpeth, Robert Ingham, Joseph Parkes, and Mr. and Mrs. Montagu, with whom a lifelong friendship was established.'

The following extracts are from letters written respectively to Professor Simon Greenleaf, Cambridge, July 1, and to Judge Story, July 23, 1838. Law, we have said, was with Sumner a love and a life, and he rejoices in every sign of the dignity and the purity of his profession.

'I know nothing that has given me greater pleasure than the elevated character of the profession as I find it, and the relation of comity and brotherhood between the bench and the bar. The latter are really the friends and helpers of the judges. Good-will, graciousness, and good manners prevail constantly. And then the duties of the bar are of the most elevated character. I do not regret that my lines have been cast in the places

where they are; but I cannot disguise the feeling akin to envy with which I regard the noble position of the English barrister, with the intervention of the attorney to protect him from the feelings and prejudices of his client, and with a code of professional morals which makes his daily duties a career of the most honourable employment. Grateful I am that I am an American; for I would not give up the priceless institutions of my country (abused and perverted as they are), the purity of morals in society, and the universal competence which prevails, in exchange for all that I have seen abroad; but still I see many things in other countries which I should be glad to have adopted among us. Let us then not sigh that we are not Europeans, but cling to our own institutions and model of society, and endeavour to engraft upon it all that is good and fitting in other countries. Such infamous professional sentiments as I have heard avowed by lawyers at our bar, and by a man like ———, would bring a brand upon an English lawyer as bad as Cain's.'

'I have alluded to the familiarity between the bench and the bar. I am assured that the judges always address barristers, even on a first introduction, without the prefix of "Mr.;" and that a unior would feel aggrieved by the formality if his senior should address him as "Mr." This same freedom I have observed between members of the House of Commons, and Peers. Indeed, wherever I meet persons who are at all acquainted, I never hear any *title*,—which is not a little singular in this country of titles.'

Mr. Sumner describes Mr. Roebuck as being 'young, ardent, ambitious, and full of great things; accomplished and Republican.' 'Dr. Lardner seems a coxcomb and pertinacious fellow.' Of Wordsworth he writes, 'I felt that I was conversing with a superior being; yet I was entirely at my ease.' His visit to Brougham Hall resulted in feelings severally of disillusion and reverence for Lord Brougham and his mother. Early in September he passed a day or two at the rectory of Archdeacon Scott, at Whitfield—a friend of Horne Tooke and Parr—which he left one rainy morning on horseback to 'spatter over the moors and valleys of Northumberland.' By and by he changed his mode of progression for an open gig, and 'at three o'clock drove into the courtyard—all surrounded by battlements—of Brougham Hall.'

'I was thoroughly wet, and covered with mud. On my mentioning my situation to his lordship, who kindly received me in the hall, he himself at once showed me to my bedroom, where I enjoyed the comfort of a complete change of dress. After I came down-stairs, he left me in the library, and went about writing letters, which were to leave by the mail before dinner. He wrote more than the number which he could frank—that is, ten—and at six o'clock was in the library dressed for dinner. The only person besides myself was an old familiar friend, a clergyman (who brought with him as a present to the ex-chancellor a bottle of rum upwards of fifty years old), though Lord Chief Justice Tindal and Lord Moncreiff (the latter the great Scotch judge and lawyer) were expected. The truly venerable and interesting mother of his lordship—now eighty-six years old—was in the dining-room when we entered, and presided at the table. Never did I see a person who bore her years so well. She seemed a fit mother for a distinguished son. Her manners were easy and even graceful, with very little of the constraint of age. She refused my proffered assistance in helping the soup, though she afterwards condescended to allow me to mangle a partridge. She is tall, has sharp features and an aquiline nose. Her countenance is much more refined and intellectual than her son's. You doubtless know that she is the niece of the historian Robertson. Lady Brougham and her daughter are at a watering-place at the south. During the dinner his lordship was constant in his attentions to his mother, addressing her as "Mother," and urging her to eat of particular dishes. I heard Mrs. Brougham address her son as "Lord Brougham." I could hardly make up my mind and my tongue to address this venerable woman as "Mrs. Brougham," which is all that belongs to her, and then speak to her son as "My lord." At table the conversation turned on light matters,—the great scarcity of game, the merits of some old Madeira (the gift of Cutlar Fergusson), of a black cock (the gift of Lord Anglesey), and of the rum (the valuable contribution of the clergyman). Besides these there was a variety of topics arising from familiarity with the parson, and reminiscences of common acquaintances. Mrs. Brougham retired very soon after the cloth was removed. His lordship took very little wine, less than I have seen any gentleman take at the head of his table in England; but if he have not that vice, which has been attributed to him,—and I fully believe that he has it not,—he has another which is, perhaps, as bad; certainly it is bad and vulgar beyond expression,—I mean *swearing*. I have dined in company nearly *every day* since I have

been in England, and I do not remember to have met a person who swore half so much as Lord Brougham;—and all this in conversation with an aged clergyman! His manner was rapid, hurried, and his voice very loud. He seemed uneasy and restless; and, of course, made me feel the same. His language, as you may well suppose, was vigorous and to the point. He told some capital stories of King William, from which I should infer, notwithstanding all the reports to the contrary, that he was on good terms with that monarch.'

We have interesting records of Mr. Sumner's reception by Lord Advocate Murray at Strachur Park; by Lord Fitzwilliam at Wentworth House, and subsequently at Milton Park; at Holkham House, by the venerable Earl of Leicester. After which, to pass by several of almost equal claims to mention, we find him, early in November, busy and observant in frequenting the courts of Westminster Hall. Once back in London, Mr. Sumner began the renewal and enlargement of his acquaintance with the bench, the bar, and society in general; and for scores of pages his letters are occupied with piquant, elegant, and, so to say, prismatic gossip and analysis of character, almost any sentence of which has an equal claim to quotation with any other. In the course of all his experience of England at this time we are puzzled as to which party should be awarded the palm of greater honour—to the ancient nation, whose good offices were as freely proffered as if Sumner had been in a position to demand the *hospitium* of all and singular of the British people; or to the young stranger, whose happy *forte* it was to compel such consideration from persons, some of whom had been known to suffer from the dashes made at English life with too free a pencil by former travellers of Mr. Sumner's nationality.

With a heart 'bursting' with regret at leaving England, yet full and beating fervently with gratitude for the kindness manifested towards him, Mr. Sumner crossed the Channel on the night of March 22, 1839, and renewed in Paris his intermittent acquaintance with various celebrated persons. In the latter part of April he set out for Italy, where he spent the months between May and September, although, as he used to tell Lord Morpeth, he had, *more Americano*, found his *Italy*, his land of romance, classicism, and antiquity, in England. Even in the inner circles of the Italian art-world, as exemplified in the studios and museums of Rome and other cities, he experienced a feeling rather of historic wonder and satisfaction than of critical liveliness or æsthetic appreciation. An ancient bust of Augustus, for instance, was not so much the triumph of the sculptor, as the suggestive petrifaction of the lineaments of 'Octavius—the Emperor, the father of his country, the Augustus of history.' Yet his developing taste led him to admire the earlier achievements of Hiram Powers, known in England for his 'Greek Slave;' and he helped to initiate the fortunes and the celebrity of Mr. Crawford, an American sculptor, with whom he came into friendly relations at Rome. This kind of help, indeed, was perfectly in harmony with those patriotic as well as personal sympathies, which made him anxious everywhere in Europe to extend and consolidate the reputation of his friends and their literary works—Story the jurist, Longfellow the poet, and Prescott the historian.

'Leaving Milan Oct. 6, Sumner reached Santa Maria at midnight, bade farewell to Italy the next morning at sunrise, as he stood on the frontier line, and reached Innsbruck on the morning of the 9th. After a week at Munich he went to Passau, thence in a small boat down the Danube to Linz, and by carriage from Linz to Vienna, where he arrived on the

25th. Here he remained a month, in the course of which he was received by Prince Metternich in his *salon*. Thence, after brief pauses at Prague, Dresden, and Leipsic, he visited Berlin, where he remained five weeks. Here he saw much of society, and conversed with the celebrated *savans* Humboldt, Savigny, Ranke, and Raumer. Mr. Wheaton, the American Minister, was absent from his post, but Sumner formed a lasting friendship with the Secretary of Legation, Theodore S. Fay. . . .

Leaving Berlin January 9, 1840, he went by the way of Leipsic, Weimar, Gotha, and Frankfort to Heidelberg, where he remained five weeks, enjoying the society of its celebrated professors, particularly of Mittermaier, who awaited with much interest his arrival. With Thibaut, then near his end, he discussed, as with Savigny at Berlin, the codification of the law. Here, as elsewhere in Germany, he studied with great earnestness the language of the country. . . .

He had consumed so much time in his journeys that he was obliged to forego a visit to Dr. Julius at Hamburg, who had followed him with urgent letters of invitation; and from Heidelberg he went to the Rhine, thence to Cologne, Brussels, and Antwerp, and crossed to London, where he arrived March 17, after a year's absence from England. His letters from Germany (and the remark is true also of his letters from Italy) are a less complete record of his life abroad than those which he wrote from England and France. He was so soon to be at home that he reserved the details of the latter part of his journey for conversations with his friends. . . .

His friends at home began to feel that it would be unwise for him to prolong his absence, and advised him not to tarry in England on his way home.'

Mr. Sumner sailed from Portsmouth April 4, 1840, for America, having Dr. Joseph G. Cogswell and N. P. Willis for fellow-passengers, and arrived at New York on Sunday, May 3, the voyage having been made in the Wellington, a sailing vessel. Professional work awaited him at Boston as soon as he was ready to resume it, in the course of which he was interested in the conduct of many important cases. His celebrity as a lawyer, advocate, and writer on legal questions steadily grew from year to year, until his forensic activity was thrown into the shade by the leading part which presently devolved upon him as a politician. His entrance into public life may be said emphatically to have begun with his delivery, July 4, 1845, of a speech before the municipal authorities of Boston, on the 'True Grandeur of Nations,' in which he avowed himself an advocate of peace. It is at this crisis of his life that Mr. Pierce for the present takes leave of him; and it is from his pen that we adopt a passage which, occurring comparatively early in the second of the volumes before us, is really retrospective of the whole of Sumner's career, especially of the attitude of mind and the dispositions which he habitually assumed and cherished towards this country.

Writing of Mr. Sumner's departure from Portsmouth in April 1840, at the conclusion of his first visit, Mr. Pierce thus delivers himself:

'He left England with a heart full of gratitude for all he had enjoyed among her people. Without blindly approving her institutions and customs, he had seen much in her older society which he hoped would yet be realised in our newer and less cultured life. In his youth he loved the country where he had passed such happy days, and he never after loved her less. Next to the freedom of the African race, no political object was ever so constant with him as perpetual peace between England and the United States. There came a time when in the discharge of his duty, as he understood it, he set forth in strong language her failure to deal justly with us in our conflict with a pro-slavery rebellion. He spoke then with the profound conviction that lasting peace between the two nations, and also the wider interests of civilisation, required an end of the controversy; and that, as the first step towards a complete settlement, the English people should be brought by an emphatic statement to realise the full justice and import of our case: but his regard for them and his interest in their welfare were as lively then as in his youth. On his fourth and final visit to Europe, a third of a century after the first, he passed the last night, before sailing on his return, with John Bright at Rochdale, when he spoke with admiration of England, and of her public men, and with much tenderness of the many friends he counted among her well-known names.'

'LOVE'S DREAMLAND.'

TRANCÈD slumbers weighing
Languor-lidded eyes,
Silken curtains swaying
Soft as Zephyr's sighs;
Golden sun-rays dancing
Over gleaming curls,
Straying glories glancing
Over orient pearls.

Heavy lashes sweeping
Dusk of downy cheek,
Eyes too bright for weeping
Closed in happy sleep;
Dreams, with dreamland's glamour
Over visions sweet:
Thus through warful clamour
Love and longing meet.

Weary days of waiting,
Weary nights of pain,
From his absence dating,
Chill her heart again;
Fresh with morning's waking,
Sad as evening's chill,
Every gladness taking
From her failing will.

Slowly hope is dying
From that loving breast;
Love is naught but sighing
For its vanished rest.
Only war and glory
Claim her lover now;
Only pain and sorrow
Stamp her aching brow!

Only dreams may bring her
To her lover's side;
Only visions wing her
To his heart, a bride;
Only thus in seeming
Can her heart forget,
Hushed in happy dreaming,
He is absent yet.

RITA.

LOVE'S DREAMLAND.

See the Verses.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DARKNESS.

The storm had very slightly abated when I started on my walk home. But this time I felt neither fatigue nor chill. The pandemonium of the elements was mere sport and derision to the anarchy within me.

I fought my way back at last, reaching the house barely in time to escape the wildest paroxysm of tempest that had yet burst—a squall whose vehemence would have felled the trees around Boregate, had there been any less tough than dwarf oaks, and that played fast and loose with the tiles.

I was met at home by another storm of reproaches, not undeserved, for my prolonged absence. It was very late, and my family were beginning to get frightened, and to talk of sending out in search of me. The twins, in particular, ridiculed me for tramping about thus, with bad weather accompaniments, as if in emulation of the Wandering Jew. I felt I must seem to them like a mad creature, and all the more for my unfeigned indifference to outward discomfort. However, I had brought what their hearts were hankering after, the newspaper, with the latest details of the interesting trial, which became forthwith the absorbing topic for the remainder of the evening. I swallowed my dinner with an effort, and then seated myself apart by the window, listening to the gale and the breakers disputing, as it were, which could make the most noise, and to occasional guns from ships in distress out at sea. It was all apt music for my meditations.

They were broken and restless, indeed. Foremost, as my imagination flew to Selsden, was a reminiscence of certain flashes of terror I had seen in Hilda's face as she talked of her husband. It pleased me. 'You hoped you had married a man after your own likeness,' I mused, 'one who neither believed in truth, nor faith, nor love's worth, nor cared for them—only for appearance. You found out your mistake soon. What you took for a light fiction turns out a hard reality. The mask you bargained for is no such thing. Take care. He loved you, as you know. So much the worse. That is why you fear him now. What would become of you, I wonder, if he knew all?'

But he never will. Already the danger for her is tided over. She has long ago reached home, burnt her note, rested and composed herself after her wild ride, ordered tea, and by this time is quite ready to meet Jasper when he returns. Another hour or two and he will be there, and find all as he left it. No presage or portent will warn him that there is ghastly treachery about. This for the present; thence follows a sad, sober, inevitable future.

Leopold, Lord Meredith, will learn wisdom—some men do, as if by magic, at the stroke of fortune. He will keep aloof, let the new and all-powerful link now drawing him nearer to his wife rivet him firmly, safe from the fatal temptation that had all but

made the breach everlasting. Away from Hilda, he and Sophie will learn to bear with each other, and agree to forget the past.

Away from Leopold, Hilda will never lose regard for her reputation and interest so far as to give occasion for grave scandal. She will submit to the force of things; begin to be glad in time that a chance event stopped her from making a desperate, irretrievable [illegible] human being [illegible] making [illegible]nt;

sent the carriage. Don't be frightened!'

I shook my head—I was past being frightened, for that day. I went down-stairs, and found one of the Selsden servants in the hall and the Selsden carriage at the door.

Mrs. Gerard, I was told, riding home, had had a fall from her horse at the curve of the hill, not far from the garden-gate. The gale had been at its highest at that moment, and the animal had, it was supposed, taken fright at the crash of a falling elm, started, [illegible]mbled, and thrown her.

[illegible] servants, already alarmed [illegible]non-appearance, were [illegible]iting and listening [illegible] hall-door, when [illegible] the tree, the [illegible] scream, [illegible]ing to [illegible] and [illegible]less. [illegible] at [illegible]

in the carriage for Selsden. I would not suffer myself to speculate on the way *why* Hilda wanted me, or what service I should have to render, or refuse to render, her now,—I was glad of it afterwards. In an hour I was there.

The doctor came out to meet me in the passage leading to Hilda's room. I knew him, as he had attended the twins through many childish epidemics.

'We are doing what we can,' was all he would say to me. The rest, I saw, I must forbear to ask. I followed him into Hilda's room, where she lay perfectly unconscious and in a quiet stupor. The servants were so panic-struck, that they seemed to have entirely lost their heads, and were even incapable of properly executing the doctor's orders. He welcomed my arrival, and showed me how to make myself useful at once. But neither nursing nor skill would be of any avail here.

Half an hour had passed. She never spoke nor moved. I did for her all I was told automatically. Thought in me was stopped, feeling was stopped, past and future were annihilated. These things can be, when we feel the shadow of death in the room with us.

At last the distant sound of wheels announced Jasper's return. Who would see him? Who break the news to him? I looked up at the doctor, and saw from his countenance that he winced from the task.

'Is there no hope whatever of saving her life?' I asked.

'None.'

Then let Jasper learn it as he may. It matters so little how. The end is one. I sank my head in my hands and listened. My ears, sharpened by the nervous strain, heard a carriage come up the drive; then, for the door of Hilda's room was open, Jasper's step in the hall, and the voice of one of the servants, an old man who had belonged to the Priory, and was immensely attached to his master. As well the news should come through him as another.

'Mrs. Gerard, sir,' he began, in a tremulous, rambling way, 'went riding this afternoon rather late, and—' He dared not speak out; paused, hesitated, stammered, procrastinating. 'Here is a note which I find she left for you, sir, in case you should return early before her, but—but—'

Fool and blunderer! I rose in a moment, with a sudden glance at Hilda, and a mad feeling that, however far away she might be, some consciousness must wake in her now. Quick as thought I flew down the staircase, and met Jasper in the hall. He held the letter in his hand, and I saw from his face that he had read it.

The servant on perceiving me coming had retreated quickly, only too willing to be relieved of his painful errand. Jasper raised his eyes, and saw me alone.

'Maisie Noel,' he uttered, in a voice I should never have recognised as his. I had to force myself to speak now.

'Hilda, returning from her ride, has had a fall on the hill, close by the garden-gate—' Would not my voice say the rest?

His countenance had not changed. All the hate and contempt from which Hilda had recoiled were there. God be thanked that vengeance was not his!

'No one can harm nor help her now,' said I slowly. 'She will die, she will die; and dead, all her love and her hatred perish together with her.'

'Will you not go to her?' I said presently; 'she might awake and know you. Your mind

and hers might meet; it will be for the last time.'

He went. I stayed below, waiting for my head to throb, my heart to beat, less madly than during these last moments, moments into which the quintessence of years was compressed.

I wished now to leave. The carriage was brought round, and I drove home in the darkness and the storm, which, seeming now to have spent its fury, was falling slowly, as if sheerly unable to rage any more.

Death and grief are sacred. None will remember her now, and condemn. So be it. Shade your eyes as you pass, and forbear. And for him, ask not too closely what kind of heart-burning it is that keeps tears far from the eyes; but instead leaves an ineffaceable brand of sternness on the brow, and everlasting scorn for her, and himself who could love her, on the lip. Let God and the right be judge between him and her. Only one hand on earth can wipe out their score—Death—and it has done so to-night.

CHAPTER XXXII.

UNDER THE CHESTNUTS.

SPRING-TIME again, but not to all of us. It seems as though when once king Death visits any particular circle he can rarely content himself with taking a single prisoner. The long winter months had been months of trial and trouble to Eva. Mr. Severn had become a confirmed invalid, and, after a tedious, protracted illness, of a kind that from the first precluded all hope of recovery, he died in March. Then Eva, worn and overstrained by the prolonged and sedulous attendance on her uncle, the instant the spur of necessity was removed, gave way herself, falling so out of health as to cause some uneasiness on her account, for a time.

I went to Westburn, and stayed with her. For the next month my physical and mental energies were entirely taken up by the happily straightforward and absorbing occupation of nursing.

Eva will get well, however, and outgrow her grief for this loss. Her uncle had never become part and parcel of her individual existence, and, though she was terribly distressed by his death, her feeling for him during his life had rather been one of gratitude and friendly esteem than of personal affection. Dead, he became actively endeared to her, however, and lived on in her remembrance only as the most perfect of men. His loss also left her alone in the world; but she was used to solitude, and less dependent on family ties for happiness than most women. By Mr. Severn's will she was now mistress of the house at Westburn and of a small income. She would have thought me heartless, could she have seen me already looking forward to the future, when she will have recovered both health and spirits, and, queen of her tiny domain, pursue her artist's career unchecked by worries or conflicting duties, and lead a freer and more ideal life than she has been able to approach hitherto.

Already she was so much better, though still weak and languid, that I, not now entirely engrossed with the practical details of nursing, could no longer keep my thoughts from straying beyond the precincts of the sick-room. Other voices would wrest away my attention, voices I had forced to be silent till now. After a week Eva will need me no longer. By that time my own life and fortunes will be decided.

I was thinking over these things as I sat in her room one April afternoon. The sun shone brightly, piercing through the drawn blinds. Eva lay resting on the sofa, with closed eyes. I had placed myself out of sight behind her, and was looking through a packet of letters, all received within the last three days.

Number one was from home. Four pages crossed to say that everybody was well, and that there was really nothing to say. That missive did not detain me many minutes.

Number two was from Sophie —Lady Meredith—long and confidential. The upshot of it was that she was beginning to live down her troubles. She found herself in comparatively smooth waters again, and with a fair chance of anchoring there permanently. Leopold had now a sufficiency of horses, dogs, lands, and money to give him constant pleasant employment, and every other sort of inducement to keep out of harm's way. He wished himself and his wife to stand well with society, as their altered position rendered desirable, and she seconded him readily. Who knows but that the shock of Hilda's death may not have been sufficient to awaken in him some dormant conscience or self-respect? As for Sophie, if her illusions are past, she has the child for her mainstay, and Francis Joseph has become the centre of her hopes and cares.

There was a long postscript about Albert Grey, now no mere literary adventurer, but named everywhere where the most successful writers of the day are spoken of. Another threatened *vie manquée* that had stumbled somehow into the right path. It is a singular and significant study to count up the characters—they are not few, in any one's list of acquaintances—that go bankrupt among life's chances and changes, and to mark how some manage to rally and float again, whilst others sink, and never lift up their heads afterwards.

Number three is Von Zbirow's, a curious, characteristic, mock-cynical letteret. He is in London; so is Theodore, who, wherever he now goes, is showered with laurels of every description, and who, the Doctor mournfully remarks by the way, is already beginning to grow lazy and stout upon his reputation, as famous singers will do.

The last is the shortest of all; a few lines only, over which I pored much longer than over the three others put together, as if the words of this last were Runic characters, with mystery and magic spells in their meaning.

I took out my watch; looked from that to Eva's recumbent figure. She seemed asleep. She could hardly miss me now if I left her for half an hour. I rose softly.

'Yes, that's right; do go out for a little while,' she murmured drowsily, without unclosing her eyes; 'I shall go to sleep presently. You must not shut yourself up all day long in a hot room with an invalid.'

'I am going,' said I, kissing her as I spoke, to hide a flush. 'Good-night—good-bye.'

I left the house and slowly skirted the churchyard, walking in the direction of the Priory grounds. The Priory itself faced me in the distance, all blank walls and closed shutters. So it had been ever since I came to Westburn. I paused, and saw a figure —the figure I expected—coming along the path across the fields towards me. I waited, leaning

against the churchyard gate, until he was close to me.

'I came,' said I, 'because Eva is resting. The least sound in the house she hears directly. I do not want her to be disturbed. She must not know of this.'

'As you please,' he said. 'But come away from here, at least, into the grounds.'

He pushed open the gate of the field; we passed through, and walked on a few steps side by side silently.

We had reached a group of tall chestnuts just bursting into leaf. Here I stopped—would go no further. It was not the first time we had stood under those trees together. Let him say there what he had to say. My answer was ready.

'How is your friend?' he asked gently.

'She is better, but not strong yet. She must be kept quiet; the smallest excitement does her harm. I did not tell her I had heard from you, and she still thinks there is no one at the Priory. I will not have her know that you are here.'

'I came last night,' he said.

He had written, then, the first moment, those lines to tell me he was there, and that, unless I forbade it, he should come this afternoon.

'To-morrow,' he continued, 'I leave it—leave England.'

'For long?' I asked indifferently.

'If you call for life a long time.'

'Not a man's "for life," most assuredly,' said I.

'Will you wait and prove what it means here—'

'It is no matter,' I interrupted quickly.

'None; what is or is not to come to me in such a future has no interest for you—not much for me. Shall I tell you what has? There is one, just one, who has power on earth to detain me, and I have come to learn from her whether I am to go.'

'From me?' I repeated.

'Don't answer me yet. Will you listen?'

I leant back against the stem of the chestnut-tree, and listened. Everything around us was quite still, as if the spring buds and birds were listening too, to learn new secrets for their love-stories, new words that breathe and thoughts that burn. But there was a sting in their sweetness and scorch in their flame.

Not a dream to-day, an idle delusion, or vain girl's fancy fathered by wish, but the outpoured offering of his soul to my soul, his life to mine, as earnest, as absolute as man's single-hearted passion can make such an oblation.

He loved me, then; held to life only for me. From the hideous shoals and rocks among which he had cast himself, paying all too dearly for his gambler's love-venture, he was free—free as the dead, and with desolation and a wreck to look back on. Light might come again, but it must be through me. He and this life would never be friends again without my love.

'Say it again, say it again,' I could have cried insensately. Could but that moment have lasted for ever, or death have overtaken me then, there, happy and forgetful at last! One must forget, to be happy thus.

Just for one perfect moment, of no earthly stamp. Then the strong tide of destructive memories came rushing back. The dead leaves of last year were laughing at us. As if one sweet word could cancel an infinitude of pain!

With a sudden movement I tore myself free.

'You love, you always loved me, you say. Haven't I learnt

the worth of love like yours for me, that you tell me so? O, life would be another thing if you could create again with one breath what once you took a fancy to destroy! How you would laugh at a man who wanted to work miracles, and talked of possible healing with a touch; and yet you think that with one word you can heal the soul!'

Too late he called his folly, folly, spoke of its expiation, of the deadly blank that had succeeded the short delight; of those days at Adlerberg, when that sunshine of the spirit, which he stood self-condemned never to seek again but at his peril, had touched him, but only to make the darkness visible and the fact more palpable that sunlight henceforth must turn to an *ignis fatuus*, in the path he had entered and bound himself to follow, for better for worse. In vain he taxed me with an unforgiving heart. His words rang in my ears like arrant mockery.

'It is not for you, who killed my faith, to taunt me with hardness now.'

'Is that your answer?' he said.

'It is.'

'Without appeal.'

I looked up. 'It seemed such a slight thing to you to say, "This one loved me—I made her, I let her. Perhaps even *I* cared. True, I chose to end that—to let her think it had been pretence on my part; but what of that, now I am free? I wish to ignore the past, make light of my error, stand where I stood before." Is it not so?'

'Don't talk of love,' he exclaimed violently. 'Love, past or present, is not implacable, like you.'

I shook my head. 'Did you think I had stood still since then; that I am the child who, three years ago, would have laid down her life for your asking? You should know now what passed through me when you turned aside and taught me never to trust what I loved again. And yet you can think such an experience can leave the gold in one unalloyed.'

I turned away from him, and pressed my face against the hard bark of the chestnut-tree. When I looked up he was gone.

Slowly I retraced my steps to the house, feeling tired and shaken as rushes may do after the storm that has left them standing.

I joined Eva; and all that evening made the mightiest exertions to talk, to look, to seem, as usual, but failed utterly. Perhaps weakness had rendered her less observant; for she took no notice, nor hinted at the slightest suspicion that anything was amiss.

That night a letter came for me. I contrived to intercept it, so that Eva should not hear of its arrival. I waited then till she was asleep and I alone in my room, before I trusted myself to read what Jasper had written.

'I was mad to leave you; but you had stunned me by your words. I could not, cannot, deny their truth. That lapse, which you say I reckon a light thing, has cost me my own self-esteem irreclaimably, and that long before it had brought me to the verge of things worse than death. Is it to put an everlasting bar between us? You declare that it is. Against all you affirmed, I could urge but this—that I love you. But I say more—*you love me;* the very enmity that burns through your replies cannot shake that certainty. Tell me that love like ours is a common thing, and that you can proudly toss it away! Does not its fulfilment mean for us the highest good? Grant that it must; and recollect that what I called upon you to do was not to condone the past,

but to dictate the future. You may utterly condemn, you may utterly deny me; but you are mine still through your love, as I am yours through mine, and this holds good, though you and I were never to meet again. What will our lives be worth if we lead them apart?

'It is for you now to give your answer. You have mine. If you feel that I have spoken the truth, and that my truth is stronger than your truth, let me have some sign—one word. If you will not yield it, I shall accept your decision, and leave, as I said, to-morrow night.'

Bold words; but was he not right, after all?

CONCLUSION.

'Men have died
Trying to find this place, which we have found.'

The day wore on. Though bare of incident, it had seemed so long, that I could have looked in the glass, and felt that if gray hairs, wrinkles, and all other marks of old age had not made their appearance, it was not for want of time. It was like the fable of Rip van Winkle reversed. Was it a day, or twenty years?

Evening closed at last. For hours I had constrained myself to sit still by Eva's side, listening automatically to the ticking of the clock, and at intervals letting drop some vague unimportant remark. More than once I caught Eva's eyes resting upon me with a look of awakened solicitude. Then I would turn away, and pretend to read a book. She must not be anxious, or fret and worry about the tossings to and fro of my storm-driven mind.

I had silenced one voice in me after another; still something that I could not stifle was harping unceasingly on the same string. 'He is going to-night; to-morrow will be over the seas, on his way to who knows what strange distant land, and beyond recall; for if I let him go to-night, pride will forbid me to repent.'

I seemed already to see him in that far-off foreign country—say Italy, the river of Lethe. He will drink of those waters—namely, its beauty, soft skies, lazy airs—till they dull remembrance. A new earth will wake for him slowly, among new faces, new modes of pleasure and usefulness. He will learn to live without love, without me. Why, he must. I have said it myself.

Something was testing and searching my heart like a probe. I sprang up, feeling I could bear it no longer; Eva lay without stirring, to all appearances sunk into a doze. I left the room on tip-toe, and stole noiselessly out of the house, turning towards the churchyard as yesterday.

It was growing dusk, but the twilight was mingled with the broad yellow sheen cast by the full moon, just rising among the trees, and gleaming over the empty fields and the closed windows and sad-looking gray walls of the Priory.

I had snatched a light cloak, the first that had come to hand, pulled the hood over my head, and, thus accoutred, sped on my way and entered the Priory grounds. All Westburn was safe in doors. Was it not their dinner-hour? As for me, led on by an imperious impulse that carried all before it, I never thought of appearances, propriety, or inquisitive eyes for an instant. Petty scruples were nowhere, and a whole army of suburban scandal-mongers would not have stopped or intimidated me.

But I met no one, not so much as a labourer, in my flight across the meadows. Like a ghost or a nun in my long gray cloak, I hastened over the grass till I reached an orchard of cherry-trees, now in full flower, that stood on the edge of the garden. There I paused for breath under a weird canopy of moonlit white blossoms.

What had I come for? I had started without even asking myself *why* I wished to see and speak with him; and now, as I neared the house, and saw only closed shutters and drawn blinds—like a house of death—I was seized with a miserable dread that I had resisted, wavered, and held back till it was too late, and that he was gone. I shrank from going on to make that fear a certitude, and felt as if nothing in the world mattered, or ever could matter thus, if only I could see him for one moment.

Then I remembered that the windows of his study—a room in which I had never set foot since our first *tête-à-tête* — were not visible from the cherry-orchard. A few hasty steps brought me on to the lawn, and I saw that those shutters were not closed, and that one of the frames was pushed slightly ajar.

In an instant I was there, pressing my face against the glass. I think I never knew true joy till then. For I had assured myself that he was not gone.

I saw the room just as it was three years ago. How I remembered every little feature! He was there, quite alone in the half-darkness, seated by the table, leaning forwards, resting his head on his hand, his countenance pale, worn, and lifeless-looking as the vacant faces staring at him out of the tapestry, but fixed and resolute. I had come but just in time.

For a minute I too stood there dumb and immovable, too overcome to stir. Would he guess; would he feel me near?

What told him, I hardly knew. I think a light spring breeze came sweeping across the lawn through the open casement into the room, bearing in a little cloud of white thorn-blossoms. His eyes turned mechanically to the window, and he saw me.

Something in the expression of his face half frightened me, suddenly, for *him;* and I began to speak hastily and at random, opening the window wide, that he might know for certain that I was not a spirit, nor hallucination of any sort.

'It is I, it is I, and I have come to—'

I was not allowed to finish my sentence. He was there in a breath. When I opened my eyes I found myself in his arms, with my head on his shoulder, and he was asking me what these tears meant.

'It is only because I was so glad,' said I childishly, 'to know you were not gone. I found I *could* not let you go. For I would have if I could, you know.'

'Ungracious to the last,' he said playfully.

'But you must not mind,' said I. 'O, you were right, and I could not help it. It was stronger than I.'

'Mine at last!' he said, lingering over the words.

'Yours from the first—yours always.'

Ah, of love there are ways many and sorts many; and some loves play us false, or may play false; some live but a little while, or fade at a touch. One there is which, lost or won, rings true, and is bound up for better or worse with our lives. That love, which is the soul's patriotism, born in

us, grown with us, silent, untried, and that bursts into full strength when we meet the heart where our heart's home lies, and to which the soul goes forth as an exile's to his native country.

Ten happy minutes afterwards we heard the sound of wheels on the road and servants' voices in the hall.

'Come,' said Jasper, laughing, 'that is the dog-cart arriving to carry me away;' and he led me out into the garden. 'They will be coming directly to tell me it is time to start. They sha'n't find me.'

They certainly never thought of coming to look for him in the cherry-orchard, where we lingered for another half hour yet.

Then we slowly wandered back over the fields to Eva's.

'Don't let us startle her,' I said to my companion; 'I want to break the surprise to her. Let me see her first.'

I ran in alone. Eva was sitting up on the sofa.

'Well?' she began expectantly; but I was too fluttered to notice it, or ask myself why.

'Dear,' said I, 'Jasper is here, and I have ever so much to tell you—'

'I know it all,' she said, with a smile.

'Eva?'

'I saw you go out yesterday, and watched you from my window. I know where you went to-night.'

O, blind love, who therefore takes for granted that others are blind also!

'Eva, Eva,' I sobbed, 'I am a great deal too happy. It is not natural. It is not right. Will not something frightful happen immediately to me or to Jasper?'

'Hush, you silly child,' she said, laughing; 'it is because it is your nature to feel everything as keenly as it can be felt, I think—suffering as well as enjoyment. So it is all fairer than perhaps it seems to you at this moment. Don't torment yourself, but take your happiness when it comes.'

And I took it.

Should we end with an Epithalamium, after all? We must, if we are to look forward into the summer that followed that April night.

So pause here. One day—my last at home—whilst taking a bird's-eye view of things gone by, something made me turn to Jock—who lives still, though he, like other songsters, is growing fat and lazy, and whose cage-door might now be left open all day, he never would try to go a-roaming—and presently begin thinking aloud.

'Jock,' said I philosophically, 'who would believe that such a little mite as you could be a serious influence in the world? Yet, Jock, let me tell you that if you had *not* flown away one fine morning, years ago, your young mistress would have quite another story to tell of her life and her fortunes.'

It was the last confidence of hers he was ever to receive.

The End.

THE TRUMPETER'S HORSE.*

I WAS nearly forty years of age, and felt myself so safely anchored in the peaceable haven of a bachelor's life, that nothing would induce me to run the risk of disturbing it by marriage. But I had reckoned without the trumpeter's horse.

It was at the end of September 1864 that I arrived at Paris from Baden, intending only to remain four-and-twenty hours. I had invited four or five friends to join me in Poitou for the hunting season, and as they were to arrive at the beginning of October, I had only allowed myself a week at La Roche Targé to prepare for their reception. A letter from home awaited my arrival at Paris, bringing me the disastrous intelligence that out of twelve horses five had fallen ill or lame during my stay at Baden, so that I was under the necessity of remounting my cavalry before I left Paris.

I made the round of all the horsedealers of the Champs Elysées, where I was shown a collection of screws, the average price of which was 120*l.*; but I was neither in a humour nor in cash to throw away my money upon such useless beasts. It was a Wednesday, the day of Chéri's autumn sale; I went to the Rue de Ponthieu, and purchased at a venture eight horses, which cost me altogether 200*l.* 'Out of the eight,' said I to myself, 'there will be surely four or five which will go.'

Among these horses there was one which, I confess, I bought principally on account of his coat. The catalogue did not assign to him any special qualifications as a hunter. All that it stated was, 'Brutus, a saddle-horse, aged, well broken.' It was a large dappled gray horse, but never had I seen one better marked, its smooth white skin dappled over with fine black spots so regularly distributed.

The next morning I left for La Roche Targé, and the following day my horses arrived. My first care was for Brutus. This gray horse had been running for the last forty-eight hours in my head, and I was anxious to try his paces, and see what he was good for. He had long teeth, and every mark of a respectable age, a powerful shoulder, and he carried his head well; but what I most admired in Brutus was the way in which he looked at me, following every movement with his attentive, intelligent, inquisitive eye. Even my words seemed to interest him; he leant his head on one side as if to hear me, and when I had finished speaking, replied with a merry neigh. The other seven horses were brought out to me in succession, but they resembled any other horses, and Brutus certainly was different from them all. I was anxious to take a little ride in the country, in order to make his acquaintance.

Brutus allowed himself to be saddled, bridled, and mounted as a horse who knew his work, and we started quietly together, the best friends possible. He had a beautiful mouth, and answered to

* This story is taken, by permission of the author, M. Ludovic Halévy, from his volume entitled *Madame et Monsieur Cardinal*, published by Michel Levy frères, Paris.

every turn of the rein, arching his neck, and champing his bit. His paces were perfect; he began by a slow measured canter, raising his feet very high, and letting them fall with the regularity of a pendulum. I tried him at a trot and a short gallop, but when I sought to quicken his pace he began to amble in grand style. 'Ah,' said I, 'I see how it is; I have bought an old horse out of the cavalry riding-school at Saumur.'

I was about to turn homewards, satisfied with the talents of Brutus, when a shot was heard a short distance off. It was one of my keepers firing at a rabbit, for which shot be it said, *en passant*, he afterwards received a handsome present from my wife. I was then exactly in the centre of an open space where six long green roads met. On hearing the shot Brutus stopped short, and put his ears forward in an attitude of attention; I was surprised to see him so impressionable. After the brilliant military education I assumed he had received in his youth, he must be well accustomed to the report of a gun. I pressed my knees against him to make him move on, but Brutus would not stir. I tried to back him, to make him turn to the right or to the left, but in vain. I made him feel my riding-whip, but still he was immovable. Brutus was not to be displaced; and yet —do not smile, for mine is a true history—each time I urged him to move the horse turned his head round, and gazed upon me with an eye expressive of impatience and surprise, and then relapsed into his motionless attitude. There was evidently some misunderstanding between me and my horse. I saw it in his eyes. Brutus was saying as plainly as he could without speech, 'I, horse, do what I ought to do; and you, horseman, do not perform your part.'

I was more puzzled than embarrassed. 'What a strange horse Chéri has sold me! and why does he look upon me in such a way?' I was about to proceed to extremities, and administer to him a good thrashing, when another shot was fired.

The horse then made one bound. I thought I had gained my point, and again tried to start him, but in vain. He stopped short, and planted himself more resolutely than ever. I then got into a rage, and my riding-whip entered into play; I took it in both hands, and struck the horse right and left. But Brutus too lost patience, and finding passive resistance unavailing, defended himself by rearing, kicking, and plunging; and in the midst of the battle, while the horse capered and kicked, and I, exasperated, was flogging him with the loaded butt-end of my broken whip, Brutus nevertheless found time to look at me, not only with impatience and surprise, but with rage and indignation. While I required of the horse the obedience he refused, he, on his part, was expecting of me something I did not do.

How did this end? To my shame be it spoken, I was relentlessly and disgracefully unseated. Brutus saw there was to be nothing gained by violence, so judged it necessary to employ malice. After a moment's pause, evidently passed in reflection, the horse put down his head and stood upright on his fore-legs, with the address and equilibrium of a clown upon his hands. I was consequently deposited upon the sand, which fortunately happened to be rather thick in the place where I fell.

I tried to raise myself, but I cried out and fell stretched with my face towards the ground. I

felt as if a knife were sticking in my left leg. The hurt did not prove serious—the snapping of one of the small tendons—but not the less painful. I succeeded, however, in turning myself, and sat down; but while I was rubbing my eyes, which were filled with sand, I saw the great foot of a horse descend gently upon my head, and again extend me on my back. I then felt quite disheartened, and was ruminating in my mind what this strange horse could be, when I felt a quantity of sand strike me in the face. I opened my eyes, and saw Brutus throwing up the dust with both fore and hind feet, trying to bury me. This lasted for several minutes, when, apparently thinking me sufficiently interred, Brutus knelt by my grave, and then galloped round me, describing a perfect circle. I called out to him to stop. He appeared to be embarrassed; but seeing my hat, which had been separated from me in my fall, he took it between his teeth, and galloped down one of the green paths out of my sight.

I was left alone. I shook off the sand which covered me, and with my arm and right leg—my left I could not move—dragged myself to a bushy bank, where I seated myself, and shouted with all my might for assistance. But no answer; the wood was perfectly silent and deserted.

I remained alone in this wretched condition above half an hour, when I saw Brutus in the distance, returning by the same road by which he went, enveloped in a cloud of dust. Gradually, as it cleared away, I saw a little carriage approaching—a pony-chaise—and in the pony-chaise a lady, who drove it, with a small groom in the seat behind.

A few instants after, Brutus arrived covered with foam. He stopped before me, let fall my hat at his feet, and addressed me with a neigh, as much as to say: 'I have done my duty, I have brought you help.' But I did not trouble myself about Brutus and his explanations; I had no thought or looks save for the beautiful fairy who had come to my aid, and who, jumping from her little carriage, tripped lightly up to me, and suddenly two exclamations were uttered at the same moment.

'Madame de Noriolis!'

'Monsieur de la Roche Targé!'

I have an aunt, between whom and myself my marrying is a source of continual dispute.

'Marry,' she would say.

'I will not,' was my answer.

'Would you have a young lady? There are Miss A, Miss B, Miss C.'

'But I won't marry.'

'Then take a widow; there are Mrs. D, Mrs. E, Mrs. F,' &c.

'But marry I will not.'

Madame de Noriolis was always in the first rank among my aunt's widows. To tell me she was rich, lively, and pretty was unnecessary; but after setting forth all her attractions, my aunt would take from her secretary a map of the district where she lived, and point out how the estates of Noriolis and La Roche Targé joined, and she had traced a red line upon the map uniting the two properties, which she constantly obliged me to look at. 'Eight hundred acres within a ring-fence! a fine chance for a sportsman.' But I would shut my eyes, and repeat as before, 'I will never marry.' Yet, seriously speaking, I was afraid of Madame de Noriolis, and always saw her head encircled with an aureole of my aunt's red line. Charming, sensible, talented, and eight hundred acres within a ring-fence! Escape for your safety if you will not marry.

And I always did escape; but this time retreat was impossible. I lay extended on the turf, covered with sand, my hair in disorder, my clothes in tatters, and my leg stiff.

'What are you doing here?' inquired Madame de Noriolis. 'What has happened?'

I candidly confessed I had been thrown.

'But you are not much hurt?'

'No; but I have put something out in my leg—nothing serious, I am sure.'

'And where is the horse which has played you this trick?'

I pointed out Brutus, who was quietly grazing upon the shoots of the broom.

'How! it is him, the good horse! He has amply repaired his wrongs, as I will relate to you later. But you must go home directly.'

'How? I cannot move a step.'

'But I am going to drive you home, at the risk of compromising you.'

And calling her little groom Bob, she led me gently by one arm, while Bob took the other, and made me get into her carriage. Five minutes afterwards, we were moving in the direction of La Roche Targé, she holding the reins and driving the pony with a light hand; I looking at her, confused, embarrassed, stupid, ridiculous. Bob was charged to lead back Brutus.

'Extend your leg quite straight,' said Madame de Noriolis, 'and I will drive you very gently to avoid jolting.' When she saw me comfortably installed, 'Tell me,' she said, 'how you were thrown, and I will explain how I came to your assistance.'

I began my story, but when I spoke of the efforts of Brutus to unseat me after the two shots, 'I understand it all,' she exclaimed; 'you have bought the trumpeter's horse.'

'The trumpeter's horse?'

'Yes, that explains it all. You have seen many scenes in the Cirque de l'Impératrice, the performance of the trumpeter's horse. A Chasseur d'Afrique enters the arena upon a gray horse; then come the Arabs, who fire upon him, and he is wounded and falls; and, as you did not fall, the horse, indignant at your not performing your part in the piece, threw you down. What did he do next?'

I related the little attempt of Brutus to bury me.

'Exactly like the trumpeter's horse. He sees his master wounded; but the Arabs may return and kill him, so what does the horse do? He buries him and gallops off, carrying away the colours, that they may not fall into the hands of the Arabs.'

'That is my hat which Brutus carried off.'

'Precisely. He goes to fetch the vivandière—the vivandière of to-day being your humble servant the Countess de Noriolis. Your great gray horse galloped into my courtyard, where I was standing on the doorsteps, putting on my gloves and ready to get into my carriage. My grooms seeing a horse saddled and bridled, with a hat in his mouth and without a rider, tried to catch him; but he escapes their pursuit, goes straight up to the steps, and kneels before me. The men again try to capture him; but he gallops off, stops at the gate, turns round, and looks at me. I felt sure he was calling me; so I jumped into my carriage and set off. The horse darts through roads not always adapted for carriages; but I follow him, and arrive where I find you.'

At the moment Madame de Noriolis had finished these words

the carriage received a fearful jolt, and we saw in the air the head of Brutus, who was standing erect on his hind legs behind us. Seeing the little back seat of the carriage untenanted, he had taken the opportunity of giving us another specimen of his talents, by executing the most brilliant of all his circus performances. He had placed his fore feet upon the back seat of the little carriage, and was tranquilly continuing his route, trotting upon his hind legs alone, Bob striving in vain to replace him upon four.

Madame de Noriolis was so frightened she let the reins escape from her hands, and sank fainting in my arms. With my left hand I recovered the reins, with my right arm I supported Madame de Noriolis, my leg all the time causing me most frightful torture.

In this manner Madame de Noriolis made her first entry into La Roche Targé. When she returned there six weeks later she had become my wife.

'Such indeed is life,' she exclaimed. 'This would never have come to pass if you had not bought the trumpeter's horse.'

BATTLE-SONGS AND THEIR AUTHORS.

'War,' says Cowper, 'is a game which, were their subjects wise, kings would not play at.' It may be asserted with equal confidence that, in the coming good time of the wisdom of all men, there will be no kings to play at war or anything else. But so long as matters remain in their present condition brave men will easily be found to fight, not only without any interest in the point disputed between their sovereigns, but even without any definite knowledge of what they are fighting for. Man, happily, is not exempt from that tendency to destruction which seems to animate most beings. Nothing, however, is to be got for nothing. A hero will seldom fight for anybody but himself without some external inducement.

Once upon a time this inducement was administered in the practical form of a whipping; now it generally assumes the serener shape of money. But a great additional incentive to effort in *l'art d'égorger son prochain* is to be found in song. The constructive and destructive forces of love and fight have been, perhaps, about equally celebrated in rhyme. Both are born of the violent passions of humanity, and it is the object of the ingenious poet to increase them. Sometimes the martial singer celebrates patriotism. It is not his cue to remember that a good patriot must needs be often the enemy of the rest of mankind. This sort of song recalls the *Horaces* of P. Corneille:

'Mourir pour le pays est un si digne sort
Qu'on briguerait en foule une si belle [mort—
Tarara!'

The 'Tarara!' by the way, is seldom forgotten. Another singer makes the soldier believe he is engaged in a religious exercise. The well-known chant attributed to the Kaiser William,

'Ten thousand Frenchmen put to the sword,
For all His mercies thank the Lord!'

is scarcely a parody on too many national war-songs. Such songs present us with the Koran or the sword, the Vedas or the sword, the Bible or the sword; always the same monotonous alternative. Another singer introduces family ties. It is well known that in every battle one side fights to preserve its altars and homes, while the other serves a tyrant and a murderer solely for the sake of plunder. Another introduces the hope of profit. 'Worlds of wealth and worlds of wives are the hardy Tartar's prize,' says a song of Kemble. Whether the 'worlds of wives' are not sufficient to counterbalance the attraction of the 'worlds of wealth' is, of course, for the 'hardy Tartar' to consider. Another employs pride and ambition as its promoter of plague, pestilence, and famine, of battle and murder and sudden death. The soldier is attired in red cloth, at so much per yard, faces right-about-left, and incontinently marches off to glory. If he dies his grave is watered by the tears of a world. The steel cap and breastplate, the sword and the plume, has each its several stanza. No wonder that the warrior 'burns with conquest to be crowned,' as Arne says in his

'Tired Soldier,' when we add to all these seductions the never-failing spur of feminine beauty. 'Let no pretty girl,' says the enthusiastic Körner, 'kiss the fellow who refuses to be a fighter!' Battle-songs innumerable have this inspired utterance for their *motivo*. Other songs there are which content themselves with insulting the enemy by every variety of expression of abuse. In a heap of *Battle Ballads*, about the time of Napoleon's apogee, that brave and wise commander is stigmatised, in exceedingly bad verse, as a mischievous, cruel, tyrannical, hell-born dog, who kills his own subjects like pigs, and murders the wives and children of others. He is a foe to religion and—a Mahometan! He is the last and worst plague of Egypt. He is the vile Corsican butcher who dosed his own crew. He is a fugitive renegade, an insatiable monster of cruelty and ambition, an eternal enemy to the repose and happiness of all mankind. And so on, *ad nauseam*.

As might be well expected, there is in battle-songs that frequent disregard of prosaic meaning which distinguishes some of the highest poetic effort. One poet speaks of his hero 'setting true steel in the gore of his foes'—a Sibylline expression, which, perhaps, is less easily explained than felt. Another tells us that a soldier's life is a 'very merry, hey-down-derry sort of life enough.' Here the epithet 'hey-down-derry' quaintly illustrates the author's meaning. But this is nothing to a song of Colman's, which deserves entire quotation from its artless simplicity of diction, its animating flow of numbers, its lucid and intelligent expression, its admirable imitation of the sounds of martial music, and its reverent solemnity of conclusion, which represents its hero entering that awful land of darkness and the shadow of death:

'WHAT'S A VALIANT HERO?

(G. COLMAN.)

What's a valiant hero?
Beat the drum,
He'll come,
Row de dow, &c.
Nothing does he fear, O!
Risks his life,
While the fife,
Twittle, twittle, twero!
Row de dow, de dow,
Twittle, twittle, twero.

Havoc splits his ear, O! Groans abound, trumpets sound, Rantan tan ta rero, twittle, twittle, twero. Then the scars he'll bear, O! Muskets roar, small shot pour, Rat-a-tat too tero,* pop pop pop, twittle, twittle, twero. What brings up the rear, O! In comes death, stops his breath, good-bye, valiant hero, Twittle, twittle, rat-a-tat, Pop pop pop, row de dow,' &c.†

The rival demands of love and what is known as glory produce a series of interesting situations, whereof the dramatic poets of warfare have not been slow to avail themselves. Duty calls and the damsel cries. The echo of the clarion puts an end to amorous clippings, the roll of the drum to the lovers' ravings. Hot tears are left in haste for hotter cannon-balls, and burning bosoms for still more burning mortars. A thousand interesting incidents, in as many songs, diversify the strife between public honour and private predilection, between civil fondness and military fame. Here the lover consoles himself with exemplary confidence and modesty, by assuring his love that, though 'glory's call' divides them on earth, 'in blissful realms above' they shall be ever united. There the lady utters a fervent prayer to Heaven to have her suitor safe home again; but, finding her prayer

* One copy reads *rero*, but *tero* seems more pathetic.

† The printer has spoilt much of the beauty of the song by presenting it thus. He was of opinion that the matter was not weighty enough to justify a larger consumption of space.

disregarded, soon consoles herself, after the fashion of her sex, by marrying some one else.

The song known as General Wolfe's is a fair type of the sentiments and expression of that vast number of so-called patriotic songs, which connect courage with cognac, and recommend strong drink to drown all the sorrows of reflective thought. In this song the almighty panacea is the wine-goblet:

> 'How stands the glass around?
> Let mirth and wine abound;
> Drink on and let's be jolly, boys.'

For those unfortunate ones who have very poor and unhappy brains for drinking—for those who are averse to alcoholic stimulant, or incapable of taking it without subsequent illness—no aid against the attacks of melancholy is here provided. But for the rest, a cure of all their discomforts is to be found in 'a bottle and a kind landlady.' Thus, the song says in its last stanza, are those boys whom the next campaign will not send to heaven to be consoled on earth.

Other songs there are—whose name is legion—which endeavour to persuade the soldier, chiefly by a monotonous repetition of the same idea in the same words, that merriment is to be met with in martial music. The following sample is by E. Knight:

> 'Merry sounds the drum, and merry sounds the fife,
> And merry, boys, merry, boys, is the soldier's life;
> Merry, merry, merry, boys, is the soldier's life,
> For merry sounds the drum, boys, and merry sounds the fife.'

And so on. One is naturally tempted to ask the need, unless the author of the lyric had himself some hidden misgivings about the military merriment, of this 'damnable iteration.' Songs of this sample strive to banish a certain natural uneasiness, not fear—for, as one of them says, or rather sings, with equal truth, melody, and modesty,

> 'No British heart a foreign foe e'er feared'

—by cymbals, trumpets, sackbuts, and all other kinds of music.

Many songs ring the changes upon fame—fame which is so seldom justly won, and lasts for so short a while. But the songs almost with one accord promise this slippery possession to every private: such antitheses are frequent as 'a brave soldier's death is the life of his name;' 'he who falls in the field lives in story.' 'Story' is a rare word, by the way, but it is a convenient rhyme for 'glory.' How far these poetic utterances coincide with prosaic fact it is scarcely necessary to consider. Most readers' memory will recur to Byron's Grose—'I knew a man whose loss was printed Grove, although his name was Grose'—and yet this unfortunate and fortunate man was a great deal more than a mere private.

One song promises the warrior that women will 'shed a tear' for him, if he is unfortunate enough to have a steel bayonet twisted through him. Another, that in a like case the poet 'will breathe a lay' for him, which, if it resemble the lay containing the promise, must assuredly communicate an additional bitterness to death. Fame after all is a doubtful advantage, but how nearly approaching to a satirist is that songster who tells the simple soldier that his deeds shall 'appear recorded on the front of day'—the simple soldier who, nine hundred and ninety-nine times out of a thousand, dies neglected and forgotten in a ditch!

The fashionable notoriety into which Turkey and Russia have emerged out of a happy oblivion

during the past year of their internecine hatred renders necessary, if possible, in an article on war-songs, some mention of those of both these countries. But the chapter on the former must bear no slight resemblance to the famous chapter on snakes in Horrebow's *Natural History of Iceland:*

'CHAP. LXXII. *Concerning Snakes.*—No snakes of any kind are to be met with throughout the whole island.'

No war-songs of any kind are to be met with throughout the whole of Turkestan. It is true that certain *soi-disant* Turkish national songs are to be found, but they are translations or adaptations generally of French or Italian poetry. Both these people have sufficient military enthusiasm to supply with songs, not only themselves, but any other nation that may demand them. Victor Hugo's Turkish March is a sample of these exotic growths.

Of the war-songs of Russia, says Mr. Ralston, to whom the reader is indebted for the succeeding translations, many refer to the wars with Sweden, as that in which a General Sheremetef chases the Swedish commandant up to the very walls of Dorpat; and another in which a girl tells her mother of a dream which presented to her a steep hill, on which was a white stone, and on the stone a cytisus, and on the cytisus a purple eagle, and in the eagle's claws a black crow. The mother explains the dream:

'The steep hill is stone-built Moskva,
The white stone is our Kreml Gorod,
The cytisus is the Kremlin palace,
The purple eagle is our father the orthodox Tsar,
And the black crow is the Swedish king.
Our Gosudar will conquer the Swedish land,
And the king himself will lead into captivity.'

The Russian songs are more often tender with the pathos of truth than fervid with patriotic fire. Such a song as the following would be of little service in recruiting a regiment. A young conscript enrolled among the imperial dragoons laments thus, while his long locks fall under the official shears:

'Not for my black curls do I mourn,
But I mourn for my own home.
In my home are three sorrows,
And the first sorrow is—
I have parted from my father and mother,
From my father and from my mother,
From my young wife,
From my orphaned boys,
From my little children.'

In another song one of the soldiers is followed by his weeping sweetheart. He consoles her with that sad consolation which Mephistopheles offers to Faust in the case of Marguerite, '*Sie est nicht die erste:*'

'Not thou alone art unhappy;
I also, the bold youth, am sad,
Going to a far-off land—
To an unknown far-off land
Do I go in the service of the Gosudar.'

The Russian battle-songs are mostly mournful. The inspiration of music, the means of gain, the hope of glory, the intoxication of woman's love, cannot wipe from the mind of the Sclav the ever-present possibility of a painful death, in the midst of many of his dying friends, rolling in anguish on a bloody field, where the last sight of his eyes is his flaming home, the last sound in his ears the cries of his wife and family abandoned amidst its ruins. If they weep not for the loss of hair, of home, of parents, of children, or of sweethearts, they may still weep for the loss of an emperor:

'By the tomb of the emperor
* * * *
A young sergeant prayed to God,
Weeping the while, as a river flows,
For the recent death of the emperor,
The emperor Peter the First.
And thus amid his sobs he spake:

"Split asunder, O damp mother Earth;
On all four sides
Open, ye coffin planks;
Unroll, O brocade of gold;
And do thou arise, awake, Gosudar,"' &c.

The present Russian army is said to be very scantily supplied with bands, and the men march to the sound of music and words of their own composition. *Apropos* of Russian war-songs, a witty American once said, that when a man had been compelled to listen to a Russian melody he would certainly be exceedingly anxious to fight somebody, even if he had to walk a thousand miles to find him. If Russian songs really produce this inspiriting effect, they must be of a character very widely removed from those which Mr. Ralston has cited as samples of military anthems.

Theodor Körner was born at Dresden in the last decade of the last century. He was educated at Leipsic, and composed several plays and poems. His plays show larger knowledge of the theatre than of the heart. His poems are almost without an exception versions with more or less *fioriture* of the familiar apophthegm of the Eton Latin Grammar, *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.* This sentiment he supports and strengthens by a liberal addition of religious enthusiasm.

'Stirb wackres Volk! für Gott und Vaterland!' is the burden of most of what are considered his master-pieces. He prays God to forget any poltroon who fears to make a just cause fecund with his blood. When Germany rose against Napoleon in 1813, this juvenile Tyrtæus, with his falchion in one hand and his fiddle in the other, fought under Lutzow. On the 25th of August Lutzow's chasseurs, in pursuit of the French, reached a little wood near Rosenberg about nightfall. Here, seated by the bivouac fire, Körner composed his famous *Schwertlied* or Sword-Song, which may be considered as a kind of German 'Rule Britannia' or 'Marseillaise.' The unfortunate poet was, in the next morning's battle, smitten by a ball, and died without a word. The whole song—a somewhat lengthy one, of which, preferring what has been called a 'literary murder' to a literary maiming, we have here given a prose analysis—is no short one, containing more than a dozen stanzas. Notwithstanding this inherent difficulty, it is said to have been committed to memory on the night of its creation by the whole army, and to have inspired every soldier with ardour in the morning sortie. It is written in the form of a dialogue, wherein the sword and its owner are the two interlocutors. The owner commences the conversation by asking his sword the reason of its *heitres Blinken* or clear glitter. The sword answers, not without courtesy, that it beams with delight at belonging to so brave an owner. The owner tells the sword that he looks on it in the light of an affianced bride. The sword, with feminine delicacy, wishes at once to know the wedding-day. The owner answers:

'The trumpet's festal warning
Tells that red bridal morning;
Under the cannon's din
I take my darling in.'

i.e. to the church in the tropical, but in the literal sense to the battle. The sword, with a woman's impatience, replies:

'O blessedest entwining!
I tarry here a-pining.
O bridegroom, take thou me!
My bride's-wreath waits for thee.'

In the next stanzas the sword is represented as clattering in its sheath with anger at the non-fulfilment of the promise of marriage. It is advised to bide for a little space in its narrow virgin bower.

But the sword expresses its anxiety to enter the fair love-garden, full of blood-red roses and of the blown blossoms of death. The owner is at last overcome by the sword's importunity, and takes his *augen Weide*—his 'eye's pasture-ground,' his iron bride, into his paternal mansion. 'Take,' says Körner, in the concluding address to his countrymen, 'take, if your hearts be cold, such a bride into your own arms to warm them. Her who once stole tender glances of love at your left God has now set on your right side to be your wife in the face of all men. Therefore press close to your lips your bride's iron mouth, all aglow with the fire of affection, and damned be every one who forsakes her! Now let our darling sing, and bright sparks leap round her in the first gray glimmer of our marriage morn!'

Each of the stanzas concludes with a 'Hurrah!' and with each 'Hurrah!' comes a strident accompaniment of clanking and clashing swords whenever this song is sung in Germany.

The words and music of the 'Marseillaise' have been attributed to a certain Rouget de Lille. He is said to have been born in 1760, and to have been the son of a lawyer. In April 1792, so runs the story, just after the French had declared war against the Austrians, De Lille happened to be in garrison at Strasburg. The mayor of that town invited him to dinner. The conversation chanced on military matters, and De Lille, who was known to have a turn for music and poetry, was asked by one of the guests to compose something suitable for the political occasion. De Lille, excited by the dinner, and complimented by the demand, took his fiddle as soon as he reached his quarters, and produced what Ulbach calls 'the eternal poem of the great apogee of the Revolution.' It was originally known as the 'Hymne des Marseillais.' Like Körner's Sword-Song, it was immediately learned by heart by everybody. Also like Körner's Sword-Song, or like Jonah's gourd, it grew up, as we see, in a single night. Not to sing it was a disgrace; to be ignorant of it was almost a crime. It contained at first only six stanzas, but at least a dozen more have been added at odd times by other patriots. Of these one only seems deserving of remembrance. It is known as the 'Strophe des Enfants:'

'Nous entrerons dans la carrière
Quand nos aînés n'y seront plus;
Nous y trouverons leur poussière
Et la trace de leurs vertus. (*bis*)
Bien moins jaloux de leur survivre
Que de partager leur cercueil,
Nous aurons le sublime orgueil
De les venger, ou de les suivre.
Aux armes, citoyens!' &c.

De Lille was in his later years twice sent to prison, and being reduced to the most sordid poverty, was obliged to translate English books, write prefaces to order, and do other literary hack labour to support life. A little before his death, when the greater part of glory's gilt and life's tinsel had been for him worn away by the hand of time, he was 'decorated with the Legion of Honour.' Several pensions also were conferred upon him, and there is no reason to doubt that they were paid, when most of the passions which money can gratify had been long extinguished in him by age. He died in 1836. He was the author of several essays, idyls, songs, and dramas, among which last is a literary curiosity called *Macbeth*, a lyrical tragedy in three acts.

But not without a rival is the honour of the 'Marseillaise' ascribed to Rouget de Lille. Another story tells us that both words and music were communi-

cated by a kind of inspiration to a body of volunteers of Marseilles one afternoon while they were patrolling the streets of their native town in all the panopoly of war.

'Partant pour la Syrie' was composed by the Count A. de Laborde. Under the Second Empire it was the national battle-song, the patriotic hymn *par excellence*. It consists of four stanzas, which recount how the young and brave Dunois, on the eve of an expedition against the infidels in Syria, prayed to the holy Virgin for her blessing, desiring modestly to marry *la plus belle*, and to be himself *le plus vaillant*. In the midst of the battle this prayer is repeated. On his return his master compliments Dunois as the 'Son of Victory,' and requests him to marry his daughter Isabelle without delay, for she is *la plus belle*, and he, Dunois, is *le plus vaillant*. In the last stanza Dunois enters into that hazardous engagement which, according to the author, can alone make man happy, and everybody in the church cries out,

> 'Amour à la plus belle,
> Honneur au plus vaillant.'

The Danish national war-song is known as the Song of Danebrog. Danebrog is the name of a flag with a white cross, which in the beginning of the thirteenth century fell from heaven at the prayer of Waldemar II., and insured the victory to his flying soldiers.

'Float bravely over the waters of the Baltic, O Danebrog, red as blood! Night shall not hide thy shine; the thunderbolt has not destroyed thee; thou hast floated over the heroes fallen into the bosom of death; thy white cross has lifted to the skies the name of Denmark.

'Fallen from heaven, O sacred relic of the Danes! Thither hast thou carried heroes such as this world has seldom seen. So long as renown shall run by land and sea, so long as the Scandinavian harp shall sound, thy glory shall not die!'

The chant is too long already, perhaps, for the reader's patience. It goes on to celebrate a Juul, a certain Danish admiral, a Tordenskjold, a Hvitfeld, and many others, most remarkable and glorious men every one of them, of whom the English reader is little likely ever to have heard even the names.

The conclusion is:

'Flatly unfold thy colours over the Danish coast, on the coast of Jadin, and in barbarous lands! Listen to the voice of the waves; it celebrates thy praises and the glory of thy defenders. Those who remain to thee swell with pride at thy name, and wish to meet death in thy honour. March then over the seas. Until the cuirasses of the north are burst in pieces, until every Danish heart be dead, thou shalt not go alone.'

The Italian war-song of '48 in Italy was the song of Godfredo Mameli.

'Italian brethren, Italy has awaked and girded her head with the helm of Scipio. Where is Victory? Let it offer unto her its hair, for God created it the servant of Rome.

'Ages have we been mocked and trodden down, because we are not a people, because we are divided. Let a single banner, one hope, gather us together; the horn of fusion has now sounded.

'Let us unite in love. Love and union reveal unto people the paths of the Lord! Let us swear to free our native soil: united for God, who can conquer us?

'From the Alps to Sicily, wherever is Legnano, every man has the heart and the hand of Ferruccio. The children of Italy call themselves Ballilla; the sound of every bell has sounded the vespers.

'Bought swords are but bending reeds. Already the eagle of Austria has lost her feathers; it has drunk the blood of Italy, with the Cossack the Polish blood, but it has burnt its heart.'

To every verse there is the following burden:

'Let us bind ourselves together in cohorts,
Let us be ready for death; Italy has called us!'

Mameli was a friend of Mazzini, who bears this high testimony to his character, '*Era impossible vederlo e non amarlo.*' Garibaldi also spoke highly of him as a soldier. Like Körner he seems to have passed his short life between singing and fighting. He died a little over twenty, of a wound in one of his legs. He wrote several poems, some of which show considerable talent. These are distinguished by a combination, as rare as it is desirable, of energy and sweetness. But of him, as Goethe wrote in his *Torquato*, it may be said,

'Wo du das Genie erblickst,
Erblickst du auch zugleich die Martirkrone.'

The Garibaldian Hymn is the composition of Mercantini, of whom little is known. He published a collection of songs more or less of a military character, with a motto from Leopardi: 'God grant my blood may be a fire in Italian bosoms!'

The following is a succinct synopsis of it:

'The tombs open and the dead rise—all our martyrs, with sword in hand and laurelled hair, the flame and name of Italy in their heart. The land of flower and song shall be again the land of arms. Italy will admit no more strangers and tyrants; a German stick cannot tame her. Italy's houses are her own; those of Germany are on the Danube. Germany has devastated Italy's fields and stolen her bread. Her sons she will yet keep for herself. Arms are to be ready and tongues mute; the face only is to be shown to the enemy, who will quickly fly beyond the mountains if Italians have one thought only—Italy if her hundred cities be one alone! Garibaldi will raise the cry "*All' armi!*" if the enemy attempt the shoulders of the Alps. The pride of the impious is for ever fallen; the King enters the Campidoglio to cry "*Viva l' Italia!*" The Seine and the Thames salute and honour the ancient lady who reassumes her reign. Content with her realm among islands and mountains, she threatens only the fronts of tyrants. Wherever a tyrant strikes the people her sons will come forth by land and sea!'

The burden is, 'Get out of Italy, get out, for it is time; get out of Italy, get out, O stranger!' The whole song is composed in the most ordinary and familiar terms of daily life.

The well-known American song 'Hail Columbia!' was written by Joseph Hopkinson, who died at Philadelphia in 1842. In the celebrated case of Rush *v.* Cobbett he was the leading counsel for the plaintiff. But he is chiefly famous for his 'Hail Columbia!' which was written in 1798, at the request of an actor named Fox, to be sung at his benefit. The poem is not remarkable for originality of sentiment or energy of expression. It is difficult to understand the cause of its popularity.

It is to a certain F. S. Key that we are indebted for the information that

'The star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.'

Key also was more of a lawyer than a poet. This popular national lyric was inspired and partially composed while the author was detained in the British fleet, during the bombardment of Fort McHenry near Baltimore, of which Key was an anxious and of course interested witness.

'Rule Britannia' is said to have been written by Thomson, the author of the *Seasons*, but more probably belongs to Mallet, who joined with him in writing *Alfred*, a masque in which the song first appeared. Southey refers to this well-known ode as the political hymn of England, 'so long as she maintains her political power.' The sentiments contained in it are too well known to need repetition.

It is difficult to find among the swarm of battle-songs any with more martial spirit than that about the drummer-boy, composed by O'Keefe. This song represents a mere child, seduced by a sergeant's shilling, a philibeg, dirk, and blue bonnet, longing to begin the slaughter.

'Cut, slash, ram, dam, O, glorious fun!
For a gun pop-pop change my little pop-gun!'

says this excellent infant, adding afterwards, with a polite oath, that he will commence his career of future dissipation by kissing the wife of his landlord wherever he may be quartered. With this song may be contrasted Campbell's 'Soldier's Dream;' in which —amongst the weary and wounded—a soldier dreams, lying on his straw pallet, of his pleasant country home, where the shrill fife is exchanged for the voice of the lark rising at daybreak from the fallow, and the rolling drum for the boom of the bittern among the marshes. The distant bleating of goats browsing on the mountain-side and the cries of the corn-reapers in the field fill up the peaceful concert, which he listens to by the side of the never-failing affectionate wife and little ones. In conclusion, however, the war-broken soldier wishes he was well out of the glorious fight.

Not inferior in its general tone, and sometimes superior to Campbell's 'Soldier's Dream' in passages of rare poetic excellence, is a song called the 'Returning Banner,' written by Hervey in 1856, at the close of the Crimean war.

Thomas Kibble Hervey was born, in the last years of the last century, at Paisley. He was educated at the Manchester Grammar School, went to Cambridge, and was intended for the bar. But the brawling courts and dusty purlieus of the law delighted him not; he preferred the serene literary seclusion of an editorship, and for some time held that of the *Athenæum*. Acting in this capacity, he distinguished himself by much incisive criticism and no little intelligible verse. His friends, who considered him capable of attaining the highest legal honours, held his life to be a *vie manquée*. He died in 1859. His song of the 'Returning Banner' is almost singularly free from the well-worn topics of fame and gain. The *crambe repetita* of love and music, which kills the reader, is not to be found here. There is not, as in many battle-songs, any pretence of religion, in which the groom and the lord are alike interested. This engaging lyric is equally void of overweening patriotic vanity and vulgar hypertrophied sentiment. It is as little likely as the 'Soldier's Dream' to occupy permanently a place among English battle-songs; it is too full of mournful poetic beauty. It

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sings simply of an old banner, borne home by brave and fortunate heroes from the battle-field—an old banner, soiled and torn and ragged, but with a star peeping through every rent in its ancient folds; a rare roving old banner, that has seen itself, as in a mirror, reflected in many waters, and which every wind that blows about this world has waved. Even the atmosphere in which it floats in the populous city

'Feeds freedom like a flower;'

while in the solitude of the wilderness it

'Flaps unheard on many a coast,
Where, but for its lonely play,
The sighing wind and the sad sea-wave
Are by themselves all day.'

So many rich thoughts are enshrined in the last three stanzas that they merit entire quotation:

'Our flag was old—that still is young—
Like the stars by which it steered,
When first in the East, with its deserts gray,
The crescent sign appeared;
And ages long since the Lion-heart
By the brave old banner stood,
Where the Western horde on the Paynim poured,
To the cry of the rosy rood.
That banner hath been forth again!
We'd bear it to the last,
Though but a rag
Of the good old flag
Hung fluttering round the mast!

Its crimson fold, to the breeze unrolled,
Makes yet a glorious tune,
When the Red-cross knights are mouldered all
Who bayed the Moslem moon.
On the sunny seas o'er which they sailed
To the shores on which they died,
O'er the silver sheen in the standard green,
And the White Cross* by its side,
Hath waved our succouring banner!
And we'd lift it to the last,
Though, &c.

'Twas a thousand years since the eagles died
That flew so high and far,
Ere rose on the world, o'er the distant wave,
The flag of the Western Star.

We have eagles now, black, red, and white,
But none like the birds of yore!
And the Lilies withered in the field
Where burns the Tricolor,
Fast by the tameless Lions,
Which we'd follow to the last,
Though,' &c.

* The white cross is borne in the flag of Sardinia.

But in many songs like these the Cain element, as Coleridge would call it, is kept too frequently in the background. They seem absolutely devoid of all military enthusiasm. They form a *hortus siccus*, a collection of dried sapless specimens. They are dead to all sense of high martial feeling, and even to a decent respect for simple patriotism and natural courage. Such lines proceed from a heart drenched in the Idle Lake, in the loathsome waters of cowardice. They might have been written by one who has entertained the silly arguments which endeavour to show war to be unchristian. As if everybody did not know that it is quite right for bodies of men to do what is quite wrong for an individual; that killing our enemies in battle is quite consistent with loving them elsewhere; that our duties to respect the Sabbath and overcome evil with good must yield to what Paley has so clearly shown to be expedient and even necessary; that Christ's disarming Peter has nothing to do with a national engagement; that a man may not revenge his own actual wrongs, but is bound to revenge with all his might even the imaginary injuries offered to his rulers; that only aggressive wars are unjustifiable, and that every war in the memory of man has been defensive; and finally, that every war is undertaken solely to promote peace and good-will on earth, and to hasten that period when swords shall be turned into ploughshares, and the pruning-hook beaten out of the spear. J. M.

THE ROMANCE OF OLD LONDON.

No. VII. CANNON-STREET STATION.

A Song of To-day.

GRAY, gray
Breaks to-day,
Where the mowers begin their reaping;
Darkly gray
To-day, to-day
Dawns where London is sleeping;
Gray, gray,
Dewy and gray,
Rising o'er meadow and hill;
Gray, gray,
Misty and gray,
Hiding the river chill.
Far away,
On moisten'd clay,
Bend crops in fertile ridges;
Over the Thames the shadows stay,
And cling about the bridges.
On uplands acres of golden grain
Ripe for the sickle stand;
Over Cannon-street Bridge the workman's train
Carries a dusty band:
Man and boy, man and boy,
Fustian and corduroy;
Pick and axe,
Hammer and tacks,
Mallet, chisel, and plane;
To-day, to-day,
Through the morning gray,
Rushes the workman's train:
'To-day, to-day,
We'll work as we may,
We'll fight against want and sorrow;
To-day, to-day,
For who can say
But we may strike to-morrow?'

Eight o'clock!
By river and dock
The sun is gathering brightness;
The mists still stay
By the arches gray,
Though the air is growing in lightness;
And the bridges seem
To belong to a dream,

Based only on fancy airy;
While their massive piers,
That have stood for years,
Look but the work of a fairy.
Eight, eight!
And a living freight
The train into Cannon-street whirls,
Clerk and porter,
Bagman and sorter,
And bevies of telegraph-girls.
Eight, eight!
Not a moment they wait,
But away to their patient toiling;
Women and men
Of flying pen,
Plodding on, never recoiling:
'To-day, to-day,
To work as we may,
To fight against want and sorrow;
To-day, to-day,
For who can say
But our work may be gone to-morrow?'

Ten, ten!
The responsible men
Minute by minute is bringing;
And by every train
Comes part of the brain
That keeps the great City swinging.
Ten o'clock!
They can send a shock
To the uttermost parts of the nation;
Ten o'clock!
How they flock
Under the roof of the station!
Fortunes and lives
Of children and wives,
Of hard-working sisters and brothers,
To make or mar
In the ceaseless war
They wage for themselves and others:
'To-day, to-day,
To toil as we may,
With loss or wealth for our guerdon;
For the black hearse waits
At the platform-gates—
Waits for the coffin and burden.
To-day, to-day,
To toil as we may,
To fight against shame and sorrow;
To-day, to-day,
For who can say,
We may fail or die to-morrow?'

'Stay, stay!'
To-day, to-day,
Where the City's great heart is beating;
'Stay, stay!'
To-day, to-day,
Cries out by its moments fleeting;
To-day, to-day,
Whether sad or gay,
We welcome the fresh morning air;
To-day, to-day,
One second we stay
To join in the City's prayer;
To-day, as we toss
From profit to loss,
'Domine dirige nos;
Domine dirige nos.'*

L. ALLDRIDGE.

* The City motto.

CHRISTMAS-DAY IN ROME.

HALF-PAST five! A loud knocking at our bedroom-door. It is the Swiss porter, the only one of the two hundred denizens of our hotel awake at this hour. He was ordered to call us early, that we might be at St. Peter's for the pastoral music at seven. So a grope for the matches, a hasty toilet by the scanty light of the *bougie;* we blow it out and leave our room, forgetting that gas is not kept burning all night through in the corridors. We shall have to grope our way down a long passage and four flights of stairs in the dark; and if any one should chance to come— But we are already at the top of the first flight. Steps are approaching; we fear a collision. '*Qui va là?*' We are answered by the well-known voice of a Prussian officer, bound on the same errand as ourselves, who comes at once to the rescue, producing from his pocket fusees, and leaving a grand illumination on each landing, we descend. We pass out beneath a clear frosty starlit sky, to walk for half an hour through the narrow streets paved with little worn squares of lava which form the dismal approach from the Spanish quarter to the Trastevere. Noisy enough they are by day, when foot-passengers have to creep along by the shop-doors to avoid being run over by the carriages, which take up nearly all the street; so it is a new phase in our experience of the city to find them silent and deserted. When we emerge on the banks of the Tiber, we enjoy standing at our ease on the bridge of St. Angelo, unjostled by the crowd, looking up at the statues, which rise majestic in the starlight, and down at the tawny rushing flow beneath. On, under the castle and the drawn sword of the archangel: the blind beggar is not in his corner of the pavement, for no sun can reach it for several hours yet. There is not the usual display of rosaries, bronze Peters, Dying Gladiators, photos of Pio Nono, and other strangers' wares, to attract our notice along the narrow Borgo; and when it suddenly opens into the grand piazza, the colonnades, obelisk, and steps lack their usual animation. All lies still and grand beneath the stars, like a face with finely-chiselled features, most majestic when seen in sleep. There are no maimed beggars with badges (authorised objects of pity); the photograph-vendors have not yet begun to ply their trade. One branch of business alone is carried on upon the topmost step before entering the vestibule; it is hiring out camp-stools for the chapel. The well-dressed gentleman who holds back the heavy leather curtain as you enter, and surprises you, on receiving your bow of acknowledgment, by holding out his hat, does not, however, fail in his courtesy even at this early hour. The vast nave seems larger and wider than ever as we look up to the distant lights burning around the central shrine, before which kneels the marble Pope; all the rest is dimness till we join the waiting crowd before the gates of the Virgin's chapel. Service

will be held here as usual; for it can only be celebrated at the high altar by the Pope himself, and 'the Church is in mourning;' so its head takes no part in these public ceremonies. The usual English element predominates in the crowd; some determined sight-seers have already been standing an hour outside these locked gates, while we have waited barely two minutes. When they open, the living mass surges on into the blaze of light, and fills all the vacant space. Of course no seats are provided; the faithful kneel all the time on the cold marble floor, which would assuredly produce rheumatism in a heretic. The corners of the pillars afford one or two seats, but these are speedily occupied, and people are still surging in; so that it is difficult to keep even standing-room. A young countrywoman of ours has audaciously seated herself in one of the canon's vacant stalls; we glance inquiringly, and are answered by a kind smile and readiness to make room for us. We follow the bold example, and ensconce ourselves comfortably above the crowd to watch the numerous figures that gather at our feet—*contadini* in their picturesque velveteens and goatskin leggings, leading little children by the hand (when must they have started from their homes on the hills to be here at so early an hour?); denizens of the town, whose commonest gesture and expression were worthy of a buffo-singer; below us sat one in particular, whose long nose and flexile lips might have adorned the cover of some comic periodical. Then entered the procession; its leading figure the Archbishop of Malta, in white-satin mitre studded with gems, while a gold one is borne before him on a cushion; the acolytes with their long thick tapers; the host of canons and minor canons, distinguished by their respective tippets of gray and white fur. The music rolls, voices break forth from the gallery above, and the ceremonial proceeds. The old canons are very drowsy; they are principally engaged in exchanging pinches of snuff, passed round in boxes bearing the Pope's likeness; but they rouse up when the time comes for giving the kiss of peace, which is transferred regularly from priest to priest, each in turn laying both hands on his neighbour's shoulders. We have been enjoying our survey for some time unmolested, when we attract the verger's attention, and he marches up, staff in hand, to protest against the intrusion. We appeal to his feelings, and ask where we are to find room; he looks at the dense crowd, shrugs his shoulders, and offers to let us remain in possession if we will descend to a seat on the footstools: we are glad enough to compromise and take this humbler position. Presently the sun's beams fall aslant the walls, shaming the lights and decorations. We pass out into the nave, and can now see that each of the massive pillars is clothed half-way with crimson satin. The steps leading down into the piazza are busy enough now; the man with the camp-stools is still there, for at nine o'clock there is to be a second service.

By that time we are breakfasting on the English baker's delicious brown bread, and ready for our walk through the sunny piazza, under the terraces of the Pincio, past the obelisk and lions, to the English church just outside the Porta del Popolo, where maidenhair fern and camellias wreathe the candelabra, mingling with laurel and mistletoe to re-

mind us that we are in a foreign land, though commemorating our festival in an English church.

After lunch we start in an exactly opposite direction to reach one of the finest of Roman basilicas, Santa Maria Maggiore, also called, from its old tradition of foundation, Santa Maria della Neve. The walk thither leads us up the steep street by the Barberini Palace, in front of which stands the newly-erected statue of Thorwaldsen, dwarfed by the gigantic scale of its surroundings; past the Quattro Fontane, where lie the four ancient river-gods under the house-walls, sending forth perpetual gurgling streams of delicious water into the basins at the four street-corners; past the Via Venti Settembre, declared by its newly-bestowed title to be that through which Victor Emanuel's troops entered the Eternal City. We stand for a second beneath the lofty Portugal laurels of a neighbouring garden, so altered by the clusters of purple fruit which cover each bough that at first we fail to recognise the old friend of our home-gardens. The street is now seen to be one long straight line, extending from obelisk to obelisk; that on the north is in front of the Trinità del Monte, while one to the south rises on the well-known Esquiline, whose summit is crowned with the domes and tower of Santa Maria Maggiore. We generally walk hither along a quiet road, its one familiar figure being the old woman with the brazier and chestnuts; but to-day the world is all astir: bands of students from the colleges are walking hither two by two, in those picturesque robes which serve to distinguish their nationality, and are one of the main elements in that bright colouring by which the streets of Rome are distinguished; while surely every carriage in the city must be driving up and depositing its load before the steps of the basilica. The poor cripples have a hard day's work in lifting the heavy curtains for each party who enters the church. Let us hope that it is profitable enough to make the day one of rejoicing to them also.

And what is the scene inside? The grandest promenade concert imaginable. Strains of chanting reëcho from invisible singers in galleries on either side the tribune; every pillar is draped with crimson, and from it are suspended grand chandeliers of drop-glass; thousands and thousands of wax-lights are burning; the fine old mosaics glitter. One beauty of the church alone is entirely concealed—its fine pavement of Alexandrine mosaic; for over it swarm thousands of human beings—a moving mass of all nations and costumes. There kneels a Sister of Charity, absorbed in her devotions and undisturbed in the midst of lively groups; there a group of American visitors discussing the marbles in the Borghese chapel. Every one of the spacious side-chapels is thrown open and well lighted; while the confessionals in the side-aisles are occupied by priests armed with long wands, with which they bestow a tap of benediction on the heads of the faithful, who kneel as they pass. We watch the kaleidoscopic scene, and see the groups part and form again as the procession of the Presepio passes up the nave and circles round the Borghese chapel, its approach announced by the white umbrella, accompanied by lighted tapers, acolytes, and priests in their most gorgeous vestments, Monsignor de Mérode, Archbishop of Malta, again among them. We leave the blaze of light for the dim nightfall without, reaching

our hotel in time to assist in putting final touches to the Christmas-tree, which has just been brought into the *salon*, and is to dawn in full splendour on the assembled company after the *table d'hôte*. In deference to the English and American element in the gathering, the dinner ends with dishes figuring on the *menu* as 'means-pie' and 'plump-pudding;' then the waiters hand round silver trays bearing a tiny bouquet for each visitor, their own offering in honour of the day. Danes and Italians begin to exchange formal speeches in French, complimenting each other's country, when they are cut short by an English speech from an American editor, rising to announce the arrangements made for the evening. It is to conclude with a dance, as the landlord has engaged a musician on purpose. The German waiters throng about the door to watch our proceedings; for they take a thorough interest in the hotel-tree. We draw lots for its fruits of Roman pearls, scarves, costumes, boxes of *confetti*, books in white-vellum bindings, Venetian glass, and ladies' gloves (the latter, of course, falling to the gentleman with the largest hand); then all the children staying in the house make a combined and persevering assault on the gilt walnuts and silver cages of dried fruit with which it is covered. The room is next cleared for dancing, and the musician introduced; English, French, German, and American couples show their respective steps and whirl round, giving the carpet the best beating it is likely to receive for many a month. Large plants, decorated with artificial flowers, line the entrance, and all looks like a festive night. Nor do we disperse till we have trespassed on the new day which is to scatter the merry party into so many groups, north and south, never to meet again. 'Of meetings and partings our life is composed;' but we never realise this so fully as when each day finds us surrounded by new scenes and new faces.

TAKEN RED-HANDED.

'THIS way, señor; this way!'

It was only an office-boy who spoke, but he was a precocious youth, and he flattered himself he knew a Spanish gentleman when he saw one. And Spanish gentlemen were well known in that office hard by the Strand, for it was especially devised for holding communion with Spanish gentlemen—of the Carlist persuasion; and, in fact, was the headquarters of the London committee for aiding the Pretender to the Spanish throne.

A dark, gloomy, saturnine young man, handsome withal, but appearing overborne with some deep feeling, was he now in the hands of that office-boy; and his question, uttered in English so broken as to be almost destroyed, had been to the effect that he was in search of a Mr. Edward Royston who was at the taking of Estella in February of the current year (1876), and was believed to have fled to England on the collapse of the Carlist cause—Did the London Committee know anything of the gentleman?

'Well, I should jolly well think so,' said the office-boy, who had now perched himself on an office-stool, and was trying to look altogether as official as he could, considering his diminutive inches and his very juvenile appearance: 'I should jolly well think so. Why, he's one of our great guns, is Mr. Royston; bin a-fighting there like winkin'!'

'Ah, yes, "great guns"—what you call cannon; but he can run as well as fight—better than fight, for he runs with the plunderer.'

This gibberish the office-boy could not understand, more especially as it was emphasised with a ferocious glance which made him feel queer; so he hastily asked what he could do for the señor, and for the rest of the interview he was, as he subsequently told a fellow office-boy round the corner, 'all in the humble-pie business.'

Could he introduce the new comer—who gave his name as Blas Gelasco, a captain of Carlists—to any responsible member of the Committee able to talk Spanish, for the captain's English was very indifferent to speak, though he was able to read it fluently.

No, the office-boy could not; for none of them that he knew of were in town just then, but he could forward any letters.

Letters? Pest! They were useless, for the matter was urgent. Where was Mr. Royston to be found?

The office-boy turned to his books with excellent alacrity, and, the place being found, read from them with great satisfaction—for that fierce hungry eye of Señor Gelasco's never moved from him—'Edward Royston, Esq., Lakelands, near Ambleside, Westmoreland.'

Glancing up quickly as he pronounced the last word, the boy noticed that his visitor was toying nervously with something looking remarkably like the butt of a pistol stuck in his bosom, and the office-boy felt more queer than ever.

'And it is his living—what you call?—where he does live?'

'Yes, that's his address; sure

to find him there,' was the hasty reply, not that the lad had any authority for the assertion beyond the evidence of his books; but, truth to say, he feared the unwholesome gleam of Blas Gelasco's eye, and would gladly see him out of the place.

The Spaniard remarked the effect he had produced; he knew fear when he saw it, and he also knew its value for his own ends.

'And say to me,' he went on, 'in that book is there the living of—of—one Nella—ah!—Nella—'

'O yes,' interrupted the precocious one; 'funny name, and I remember it well. Never heard it before.'

He galloped over the pages at a great rate, paused, spoke:

'Yes, here it is—a lady—Nella Fitzgibbon. Why, it's the same address as Mr. Royston's!'

The dark look on the Spaniard's face grew black as Erebus, and a passion the lad knew not of, as yet, made the man's dark features writhe again. It was the writhing of revenge.

But he mastered it in a moment, and calmly asked:

'She lives there, then?'

'Yes, certainly; it seems she lives there with him.'

'Ah, thank you, my young friend. I will see this—ah!—Roystone. Here is for your information. I thank you.'

Placing a paper on the counter he passed hastily out, and was lost in the tramping crowds of the Strand before the office-boy had recovered from his surprise, had opened the little packet, and found inside a couple of English sovereigns. Then he ran after Blas Gelasco to return the money, but that romantic personage had vanished in the surging tide of humanity round Charing Cross; and when the youth got back to his desk he found another gentleman waiting him.

'Why, Mr. Royston!' he cried: 'Good gracious, if you had only been here a minute ago!'

'Well, and if I had, William, what then?'

The speaker was a straight young Saxon, bronzed a little in the face—a blue-eyed, yellow-haired model of the English gentleman of good blood—and he was dressed faultlessly, but as one is who has 'just run up to town, you know, all in the rough.'

'Why, there was, not a second ago, a Spanish fellow—ahem! gentleman, I mean—inquiring after you.'

'Yes; and what did he want?'

'Well, Mr. Royston, he had a pistol!'

The other laughed. He had seen a good deal of active service, off and on, with Don Carlos; for he was one engaged in the very dangerous business of supplying that hero's army with money and arms, and he took a hand in the fighting whenever he came across any. Therefore he was not to be frightened by the mention of a pistol, though William was, and said so with considerable energy.

'Yes, Mr. Royston, I *was* scared a bit; and, d'ye know, he got your address out of me!'

'Did he leave his own?'

'No; I clean forgot to ask him. Perhaps it's—'

But no; there was no writing whatever on the paper in which the gold had been wrapped; and William looked like one expecting a rare blowing-up. He did not get it, however; for Ed. Royston was a kind as well as reckless fellow, and he supposed the Spaniard was some half-crazed refugee from the war, unable as yet to get rid of the habit of carrying weapons. William was more affected.

'But I say, Mr. Royston, I know his name—Mr. Blas Gelasco!'

The English Carlist started violently, and for a moment his sun-yellowed face grew white as death. But he immediately put from him whatever thought had occasioned that deadly pallor, and laughed.

'Pshaw!' he said, 'what a fool I am! The name's common enough, and the poor fellow's bones are bleached long ago on the mountain-slopes about Ramosa. Or else this chap's an impostor.'

But that view did not suit the boy William at all. The strange manner of the visitor had made a deep impression on his nervous organisation, and he could not drive those fierce black eyes from his mental vision.

'And, Mr. Royston,' he went on, 'he got Miss Nella Fitzgibbon's address out of me too; same as yours, you know.'

'Same as mine, you thundering young idiot! Why, you don't know mine! What d'ye mean?'

Ed. Royston was really alarmed as well as angry now. Why, William could not make out. So the latter turned to his books in his confusion, and read out, one after another, the Lakelands direction, entered after the names of both gentleman and lady. Royston thought aloud,

'Blas Gelasco and Nella Fitzgibbon! Good Heavens, he can't have—'

'Hillo, Royston! Just the man I want. But what's this about Miss Fitzgibbon and Gelasco? Strange, I wished to speak to you about that very fellow, and came in here to get your address.'

The speaker was a stout, florid, elderly gentleman, who had hurriedly entered the office just as Ed. Royston was speaking. He had a bundle of railway-rugs in one hand, a travelling-coat across the other arm.

'And a precious address you'd have got,' answered Royston ruefully. 'They've got me down in their books as at Lakelands still.'

'Phew!' whistled out the other, then laughed. 'Jove, wouldn't your uncle swear! and he, after driving you out of Lakelands and cutting you off with the traditional shilling four years ago for your Spanish—ahem!—fandangoes!' He looked at his watch, then went on, 'Gad, though, I shall miss my train. Say, Royston, can't you run down with me to Chislehurst and dine with a fellow? This man calling himself Gelasco has written me—'

'Did he mention Nella Fitzgibbon?'

'He did, and very unpleasantly. We must protect her against schemers.'

'Then I'm with you. There's more in this pursuit than I thought.'

'Trot along then, or we shall be late.'

Away they went, up to the Charing-cross Terminus, and Master William put the two sovereigns in his pocket to keep until—they were called for.

Nella Fitzgibbon was a mystery.

How she came to be at Lakelands at all was known only to Mr. Royston himself—a dry old man, who did things and left things undone without ever dreaming of explaining the why or the wherefore to his three daughters, unmarried ladies who had faded into confirmed celibacy, because, forsooth, they were too dignified and proud to stoop to those engaging little mannerisms—nay, 'arts' were too harsh a word—which land many a gay young fellow in the net matrimonial.

They had no mother to bring them up in the [modern] way they should go in search of husbands —result, they were still of the sisterhood of Cologne.

'Papa,' Matilda the eldest had said one day, three years before this record opened, 'Anna Kerdle is actually going to— O, it *is* shocking!'

'The dreadful girl!'

'Really too shocking!'

He looked up at the trio testily. He had a bad attack of the gout, and that malady is no improver of the temper.

'Going to do what? *What* is shocking?'

'Well, papa, she is going to—'

All three began to reply, and then stopped.

'Do go on, one of you, and don't all speak together like a set of parrots. What is it, Matilda?'

'To be married!'

'Deuced sensible girl too.' He was just a little fond of snubbing these three daughters of his—'the candlesticks,' as they were nicknamed in the region of the Lakes, from their tallness, stiffness, and whiteness of appearance—for he held that he was hardly used by them in the matter of a total absence of grandchildren; and the withering tone in which Matilda had said, 'To be married!' argued an abhorrence on the part of that lady as though the words had been 'To be hanged!'

'But you don't know who to, papa;' so, Chorus, in the shape of the other two.

'Perhaps you'll be good enough to tell me?'

'To young Howick, the yeoman!'

That sealed Anna Kerdle's fate as lady-housekeeper at Lakelands —she was also a distant relative of the Roystons—for the old Squire was a fanatic in the point of the mingling of high blood with low blood, of the Squirearchy with Yeomanhood—and he sent the three fast-fading maidens from the study, in which he was nursing his gout, positively amazed with the vindictive feeling he gave utterance to regarding the degraded Anna. Six weeks afterwards—the office of housekeeper having meanwhile been in commission—a hired carriage from the distant railway station at Ambleside drove up the long wooded avenue at Lakelands, and Mr. Royston, receiving the sole occupant with all the courtesy due to a lady, presented Miss Nella Fitzgibbon to his daughters as their future companion, who would also relieve them of all further anxiety regarding household matters. She had been recommended, he subsequently told them, by an old friend of his (no less than our florid friend of Chislehurst); she was a perfect gentlewoman in every respect; she had had misfortunes which, for a time, had alienated her reason, and therefore she was not to be questioned, directly or indirectly, regarding her belongings or her past.

That was all he told; truly, that was all he knew; but he did not communicate that absence of further knowledge to the Misses Royston, lest those somewhat austere damsels should take heart of grace, and resent the intrusion upon them of a young and handsome person whose antecedents were, to say the least, considerably veiled in mystery. By preserving the reticence to which they were well accustomed, old Mr. Royston at the same time preserved himself from the worry of having questions put to him that he would be unable to answer; and Nella Fitzgibbon entered upon her new life with a clean bill of health, so far as the inhabitants of Lakelands were aware.

And she had great tact, had Miss Fitzgibbon, as well as a shrewd natural capability for managing the household, which speedily made her as really the mistress as though she had been born to that position. The servants respected her, for she was firm, though kind; while she would permit not a shadow of that familiarity which the grovelling tastes—so the Misses Royston put it—of poor Anna Kerdle had rather encouraged than otherwise. All went with the regularity of clockwork: the meals were on the table to the moment; the little wants of the three ladies, who were very delicate in health, were most punctiliously attended to; and the Squire, after a remarkably brief time, declared that Nella was a perfect treasure, and moreover—wonderful praise from him, for he was apt to make the most of the weakest point in the characters of all around him—that she was the first lady he had ever known who combined the best business qualifications with a demeanour that would more than pass muster in a palace.

The county families in the neighbourhood said he was in love with the creature; and they, in the 'd—d good-natured' vein, secretly warned his daughters that they might wake up some fine morning to find their housekeeper transformed into their stepmamma. But the Misses Royston coldly smiled at the folly; Nella, they soon came to say, was a true honest-hearted lady, and they were very glad their papa was as fond of her as they had themselves become. Still, she was a mystery, in the sense that they knew nothing whatever about her, except what she chose to tell them, and that was of the scantiest.

'I cannot sing it; O, I cannot sing it!' she had cried one evening, rising from the piano—she was a glorious musician, and she was wont, at odd times, to fill the old halls of Lakelands with floods of grand music—as Priscilla Royston had opened the book at a simple little Spanish song, and had asked Nella to try it.

The sisters looked at her in astonishment. Her splendid black eyes were streaming with tears, and she left the room sobbing as though her heart would break.

'Bless my soul!' said Mr. Royston, who delighted in the girl's singing, 'what *can* have affected her?'

No one could tell him, no one could guess; so he was fain to content himself with the administration of a sharp rebuke to the innocent Priscilla, and with giving directions that in future no one was to ask Nella Fitzgibbon to perform anything unless she had first done so of her own accord. The next morning she was down, as usual, long before breakfast, and there was not the slightest trace of emotion on her rather full features. After luncheon she volunteered an explanation—she had travelled in Spain a few years ago with a very dear friend who used to sing that song; they were parted for ever, and the thoughts of those happy, happy days had upset her last evening—that was all.

Various similar circumstances, or incidents rather, had occurred from time to time, always by sheer accident; but the Roystons soon found that if she was left quite alone on such occasions no actual 'scene' took place, and with great delicacy they shaped their conduct accordingly. One point Nella never approached—the season of her temporary insanity; but yet they could not help observing to one another that there must be some trace of it still lin-

gering about the hidden chambers of her mind, for the shadow of some abiding Fate was never entirely absent from her singularly expressive features.

Nor could the sisters mention to her their own peculiar sorrow; for on the only occasion when they had, in womanly fashion, commenced in low tones to speak of it, amongst themselves but in her presence, she became fearfully excited, stopped her ears with her fingers, while she almost shrieked out,

'Not that, not that! Spare me, O spare me, the hideousness of blood!'

They had been speaking of the Carlist war; of the shocking sternness of their father in driving from Lakelands and disinheriting their over-petted cousin, Edward Royston, for the double reason that he had become a Catholic, and was bitten with a mania for personally aiding Don Carlos; and of their hopes that the poor fellow might not be slain in any of the battles he ventured into. The moment Nella had cried out as above, they had ceased their conversation, and it was never again renewed in her presence. Nor did she offer any explanation of her emotion, and they had perforce to lay the whole of Spain and all things Spanish for the future under as strict a *tapu* as though Nella were a Maori chieftain and had ordained complete silence about the country, the people, and the events distracting it from end to end.

And so it gradually came to pass that she was left entirely to herself whenever she showed the least inclination that way; and whether she was in her room or about the house, whether she was musing—Mr. Royston called it 'brooding'—or working, whether she was in her private boudoir or indulging in one of her frequent long rambles in the woodlands leading over to the lake or Mere, she met with no interruption, and passed wholly unquestioned, wholly unchallenged.

The little inn in the village of Cubblebirt had a guest, on a June afternoon, of whom neither landlord nor waiter could make head nor tail. The stranger announced that he should only stay a few hours, though he would probably be backwards and forwards a good deal; ordered the best dinner and the best wine the house could afford, and then called for a sheet of note-paper, an envelope, and a boy-messenger to carry his letter to its destination. Writing materials were promptly supplied, and he sat down in the little coffee-room to indite his epistle. Suddenly he started up, said he was not sure of his geography, and asked if there was any point in the neighbourhood whence he could see Lakelands. Surely there was—a hill scarce five hundred yards away; and to that he went, carelessly leaving his letter in the blotting-pad.

He had hardly passed out by the back-door of the inn, when a fly drove up to the front one, and a passenger, who had travelled from London *viâ* Keswick, alighted. He was a foreigner—Blas Gelasco—and he wanted a room for the night. Ordering his solitary valise to be taken up to it, he was ushered into the coffee-room, saying that he would have dinner—anything there was—as soon as it could be got ready.

'Yessir, certainly, sir!' replied the waiter, and vanished.

Gelasco mooned about the apartment for a moment or two distractedly, and then his eye lit on the blotting-pad, which he opened in idleness.

Ha! what is this he sees? The envelope addressed to 'Miss Fitzgibbon, Lakelands;' the letter, couched in warm terms of affection, asking her to 'meet me in our dear old trysting-place, where the path skirts the angle of the garden-wall, and the thicket running down to the lake commences—about twilight, or perhaps a little before, will suit me; but you had better be early than late, and give me a little law if I am not there punctually. I shall be alone this time.—Yours till death, Edward Royston.'

The face of Gelasco turned a horrible greenish-yellow. His fierce black eyes sparkled again with the very concentration of passion; he stamped furiously on the floor, and the nails of his clenched fingers scored deep into the brown flesh of his hands.

'Traitress!' he cried, in his own language; 'infamous traitress and deceiver! I knew it—O, my maddened heart knew it long ago. But I will be revenged—revenge! I will be there *first!*'

The stamping brought the waiter running in, with astonishment staring from his eyes. But there was nothing unusual to be seen. Gelasco was looking out of the window at the lake, and there was no longer any sign of emotion. He calmly said he had been unable to find the bell; he had changed his mind; this room was stuffy, and he would have his dinner in his own chamber, and as soon as possible.

'Yessir; directly, sir!' and Gelasco followed the speaker up to the bedroom which had been assigned him.

Evening time—late evening time—and Nella, who had been wildly discomposed all day, had been weeping bitterly, when not hysterical (caused apparently by the receipt of her letters by the morning mail), said she would take a little stroll, for the air from the Mere might do her good.

'But dinner, Nella, my dear,' said the Squire; 'be sure you come back in time for dinner.'

'Not if I find the evening breeze really refreshing,' she wearied replied; 'for my poor head is very bad. No, I shall not be back to dinner in any case, and you will kindly excuse me?'

'Certainly, dear Nella, if you wish,' answered the three sisters, in varying form of words to express the same idea; and their handsome guest—she was more that than lady-housekeeper, but more mistress than either—stepped out of the open French window, just as she often did, without hat or shawl, and strolled away to her left, towards the walled-in fruit-garden. It was the nearest way to the lake-side, and a very favourite lonely walk of hers, particularly at the gentle hour now commencing, when the dying day lingeringly expires in the soft arms of the coming night.

Once under shelter of the red-brick wall, still throwing out some of the June heat absorbed during the sunlight, Nella Fitzgibbon hastened her steps a little. Her hitherto languid eyes shone with a desiring flame, and by the time she had reached the path, across which began the limits of the wood, her heart was beating with a strange excitement, and she peered wistfully across the tolerably open ground lying between where she stood and the village of Cubblebirt.

'Surely he will not keep me long, dear devoted fellow!' she said, as one thinking aloud, and the great black eyes blazed again while they strained in the direction whence she expected Edward Royston.

But a greater, a blacker, a fiercer-

burning pair of eyes were watching her every gesture from behind the dark shade of a tree, only a few paces on her left-half-front; and had not her eager desire kept her rooted where she first had paused, then surely must she have seen the intruder.

Seen him, and been horrified almost past the bounds of human horror. For the most furious passion the soul of man knows—Revenge, the child of Mad Jealousy—was raging in his breast; in his breast, where also lay a trusty pistol, and on its butt a stern determined hand, grasping it with murderous intent. With his eyes he devoured her in all the radiance of her beauty; with his ears he listened for the love-words he knew must come.

Nor was he mistaken; nor had he long to wait them.

'O Edward, Edward! O Edward, my best, my only—'

Raving madness! He drew and levelled his dreadful weapon with a ferocious execration. She heard him, shrieked wildly, sprang back as he fired, and then fell hurtling to the earth.

'Great heavens, man, what have you done?'

Ed. Royston, as he shouted the words, flung himself from behind on Blas Gelasco. One desperate fearful struggle, and the Spaniard was pitched clean on his head out on the pathway, and right in front of the spot where poor Nella Fitzgibbon had fallen.

Royston raised her up in his arms; she was unconscious. He shook her, in his craving to see a sign of revival; but she moved not. He tried everything he could to restore her; he was quite unsuccessful. He was seized by Gelasco, who had recovered by this time from his stunning fall; his throat was gripped as with bands of steel, and his eyes were already forcing themselves from their sockets, when two of the footmen from the house ran up and separated the pair.

'What devil's work is this?' cried old Mr. Royston, who had started out when he heard the shot, and was followed by his daughters, screaming in piercing unison. 'Edward! *You* here? And Nella shot! Good Lord, she's not dead!'

Some of the female servants had now reached the scene of the tragedy. They examined Miss Fitzgibbon, but could find no trace of a wound; and Priscilla Royston for once in her life became useful, and applied her smelling-salts to the unhappy lady, who thereupon speedily revived.

'Who's this fellow?' asked the old Squire, amazed out of his seven senses, as he pointed to Gelasco, firmly held by two of the men. 'Edward, have you no tongue? What the deuce does it all mean?'

'For the life of me, I can't tell you, uncle. But this gentleman, Blas Gelasco, is certainly Nella Fitzgibbon's husband.'

There was a cry of astonishment from all the assembled women—Nella excepted—that might have been heard at Cubblebirt, so ear-splitting was it.

'And you, villain and traitor, are her paramour!'

This from Gelasco, whose struggling, foaming fury was appalling to behold.

'Husband! my own, my darling Blas!' came faintly from Nella, 'are you truly alive? We had news of your death on the fatal hills of Ramosa, and—O heavens, my brain!—and the body was identified as yours.'

'Mine!'—he was strangely mollified; for if ever a woman spoke the truth, Nella was speaking it

TAKEN RED-HANDED.

See the Story.

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then: 'Mine! No, Nella; it was that of my poor cousin, Blas Gelasco of Vera.'

'And what did you shoot at the woman for, you scoundrel?' This from old Royston, nearly as mystified as ever.

'Uncle,' interposed Ed., 'we had better—that is to say, if you will let me enter your doors again?'

'O, stuff, stuff! Of course you may enter them. Look you, Ed.: I revoked my deed long ago. There, there, all right; you are my heir again. But, for goodness' sake, let us in, and have the whole thing cleared up.'

That it speedily was. Nella and Blas had been one of the happiest couples in Spain when the Carlist war broke out, dwelling at Osuna on the banks of the Ebro. One night, the husband being absent, the Royalists had made a sudden attack on the place, captured it, and spared no man, woman, or child they could lay hands on. Nella's infant boy was snatched from her arms, two soldiers were offering her violence, when Ed. Royston, travelling in disguise by that route the better to carry on his Carlist schemes, burst in on hearing her cries, disposed of the ruffians, placed her in his carriage, which was furnished with a Madrid official 'pass,' and succeeded in getting her away from the horrible charnel-house Osuna had suddenly become.

Three days afterwards came the news that Blas had fallen at Ramosa, and Ed., at his wit's end, had the unfortunate lady taken to Santander, where ship for England was readily procured. Her babe had never been heard of.

'Her babe—*my* babe—is alive and well; the soldiers spared it because of the mark of the Virgin on its little body.'

'My God, I thank you!' And Nella fell on her knees before her husband who had uttered these words. But he held her from him, and went on:

'Did you not criminally elope with this man Royston, when Osuna fell? Have you not lived with him here, under this roof, ever since?'

But why detail an explanation that took a considerable time to make? Nella was pure as the driven snow; she had never set eyes on Ed. Royston save in the presence of a third person, even if it was only a servant or a message-boy; and to him her deepest gratitude was due for all he had done for her, including his placing her, through the kind offices of a friend of his uncle's, at Lakelands, since he had saved her life at Osuna, her reason in England. The very morning of this threatened tragedy, she had received a post-letter from him, telling her that there was some reason to believe that, after all, her husband might be alive, might even be in England; and it was to get some clue whereby he might advertise successfully for Gelasco, who had left no London address, that he had been down and sought, as he was forbidden to go near Lakelands openly, a private interview with her.

And Nella and Blas Gelasco have at this moment a sweet *cottage ornée* between Lakelands and Cubblebirt; and Ed. Royston lives, in full favour and heirship, permanently with his old uncle; and the three 'candlesticks' melt as they doat over Nella's charming little semi-Spanish boy; and 'the mystery,' Nella Fitzgibbon that was, has no longer any reason to regret that lovely June twilight when she was 'taken red-handed' trying to devise the best means of finding her husband.

STEPHEN J. MACKENNA.

THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

NEW BOOKS.

We have still another work upon Egypt; we have had about half a dozen published in the course of the present year.* We were a little doubtful whether there really could be room for another, but we are bound to say that Dr. Klunzinger has indicated a gap, and has also supplied it. His work has a preface by Dr. Schweinfurth, who of course can say more for Dr. Klunzinger than Dr. Klunzinger can very well say for himself. Dr. Schweinfurth has carried his investigations into 'the heart of Africa,' farther perhaps than any other German traveller, and he will be listened to with respect. He knew his compatriot when he first started on his travels; but while he was travelling far and wide into the interior, Dr. Klunzinger took up his permanent abode at that Red Sea port of Koseir, of which the commercial prosperity has been so greatly injured by the Suez Railway and Canal. The author can therefore claim to give us a picture such as we have not had before of local provincial towns in Egypt. He has done the same thing for provincial life as the late Mr. Lane did for Cairo. Only in these provincial towns we have none of those modernised forms of life such as have been lately portrayed for us by Mr. McCoan and M. de Léon. The book is written with a fulness of knowledge evidenced on every page, and no careful reader will fail to obtain a large store of information. It ranges over many subjects. The author describes the harem, the bearshop, the slave-market; we have pictures of travel by land and by the river; he takes us to the desert and to the shores of the Red Sea; he describes the flora and fauna of the country; he has a specially interesting chapter on 'The Natural Treasures of the Red Sea.' But the main interest of the work lies in his reproduction of the daily life of the fellaheen of Egypt. No doubt the population is immensely overtaxed and very cruelly treated; but at the same time it is a point of honour with them not to pay their taxes unless they are cruelly treated, and they seem quite unable to comprehend that at the present time a considerable proportion of the taxes is devoted to educational purposes and the development of the resources of the country. The chapters on courtship, marriage, and female society are all interesting, with a tendency to become a little broad. He points out how, even in the immobility of Oriental life, there has been a leaning towards alteration as to the build of a ship and the character of a feast. A bill of fare, which is reprinted, is worthy of study by *gourmand* or *gourmet*. There are some pages, important only to a few, devoted to the Coptic Church, a subject which has been omitted by most modern writers. These Copts are a degenerate offshoot from the Greek Church. They

* *Upper Egypt: its People and its Products.* By C. B. Klunzinger, M.D. With a Prefatory Notice by Dr. George Schweinfurth. (Blackie & Son.)

are hardly distinguishable in social life from the Moslem population, and, indeed, millions of them have passed over to the religion of Islam. The Copt priest is a monogamist; he plays the part of a match-maker to betrothing Coptic girls; he abhors the flesh of both swine and camels; he detests the Pope, and has a weakness for ardent spirits. The Roman Catholics have tried hard to win them over, but the palm of success so far rests with the Protestants. We have thought it best to allude to the varied nature of this volume, lest our readers should feel inclined hastily to pass it over, and vote that books about Egypt add one more to the list of Egyptian plagues.

A work which, in a fragmentary form, has enjoyed a considerable private circulation, has just been published in a tolerably complete book—*Memorials of Charlotte Williams-Wynn.** The volume reminds us of such books as the memoirs of Sara Coleridge and Mrs. Hare. Miss Williams-Wynn belonged to the Welsh family of the Watkin-Williams-Wynns, and from her early youth had the advantage of associating with some of the leaders in politics and literature. We have few such letters now as appear in this volume; we send messages mainly by telegraph instead of writing letters. The lady's great friends and correspondents were Baron Bunsen, Baron Varnhagen von Ense, Mr. Carlyle, Mr. Maurice. The excellent quality of the correspondence may be guessed from the names of the writers, and the letters yield many pleasing personal references. Numerous interesting passages might be culled; we will take one or two as specimens of the work:

'In answer to your question about Lady Hester Stanhope, my father says that the idea she intends to convey, that Mr. Pitt talked much to her and took her advice, is utterly false. Some one said one day to Mr. Pitt, "What will Lady Hester say to that?" He answered very quietly, "Lady Hester and I have made a bargain together. We are each to give advice on condition that neither ever takes it."' Miss Williams-Wynn knew the society of Paris almost as well as that of London. 'Yesterday Montalembert came to see me, which was very good-natured. I liked him as you do. I should not have said he was so entirely without vanity as was represented to me, but he talked far more openly than I ever heard any man do before to a stranger. The idea of one of our statesmen discussing people and measures in the way he did would have been ludicrous.' Here is an interesting allusion to the Philosopher of Chelsea: 'I went to Cheyne-row on Monday to tea; Carlyle was very pleasant. It was very interesting to hear his account of his visit to the Bishop of St. David's, and his feelings upon morning prayers, &c., which he attended, he said, because he had no right to go to a bishop's house and not conform to his ways.' We have an interesting account of her residence at Dropmore and various places abroad. She was at Paris at the time of the *coup d'état*. Although at times her feminine logic is at fault, we will venture to predict for these letters a permanent place in literature. The occasional vague and mystic tone is to a considerable extent due to her intimacy with German thought. She certainly possessed a conscience in literary matters. 'The office of a reviewer has always seemed to me almost a holy one.

* *Memorials of Charlotte Williams-Wynn.* Edited by her Sister. (Longmans.)

It ought to be undertaken, as the painters of the middle ages did their pictures, with a prayer beforehand, that faith and truth alone might guide their hands.' It is to be hoped that Miss Wynn was a reviewer, a position for which in some provinces at least she was highly qualified. There is a good deal of current history. She has much to say about Dean Stanley; but the Dean might ask to be saved from his friends, as she goes to hear him preach and pronounces his sermon to be heathenish. She tells us that Mrs. Southey—Caroline Bowles that was—lost half her income on marrying the poet. She tells us that Prince Albert had a strong presentiment of his early death, and strove to make the Queen acquiesce in the thought. He considered that in a future state of existence he might be able to work without the limitations with which he was encompassed in this world. The chief regret which this volume leaves us is, that we have not a fuller account of Miss Wynn's personal history. She died amid the pine-forests of Arcachon in 1869.

The *New Republic** is an extremely clever and amusing book. It has a vein of clear thoughtfulness and considerable learning. Through the *New Republic* we get glimpses of Plato's beyond. It is truly a *symposium*, of a much more amusing character than modern Platonic imitations; and we have other tokens of familiarity with Greek thought. The *Rejected Addresses* are not more amusing parodies than many of the speeches we have here, only they are not strictly to be called parodies, as they substantially adumbrate the teaching of such men as Huxley, Dr. Jowett, Mr. Lecky, Mr. Pater, Dean Stanley, Ruskin, and others. Dr. Jenkinson's sermon, though much longer than most sermons, is a *reductio ad absurdum* of some fashionable preachers; we are unable to decide whether the original is Mr. Haweis or Mr. Stopford Brooke, the Master of Balliol or the Dean of Westminster. It would be easy to give a list of the supposed characters, and some are unmistakable enough under a thin disguise; but in other cases the proffered identifications are not satisfactory, or not meant to be complete so far as the author's artistic purpose is achieved. Dr. Seydon, for instance, is no clear-cut identification with Dr. Pusey, and we object altogether to any identification of the ladies in the story. How far, indeed, the author is justified in bringing living characters upon the stage with a certain amount of travesty and parody is a point which we leave to his own conscience. Certainly it is one of the most brilliant works which we have read for a long time, indeed with a larger admixture of epigram and paradox than we can recall in any. Mr. Mallock, no doubt, writes with a serious purpose. This is satisfactorily indicated by his own writings in the *Contemporary*, and by his recent article in the *Quarterly*. But his treatment of the grave themes which he discusses is not satisfactory. He has a destructive method, and not a constructive; he is a free-lance among free-lances; he breaks and blunts the weapons of scepticism, but he takes no distinct side in the conflict. There is much wit and wisdom in the work, and bright social sketches of society. But it is a society which reminds us of the ladies of

* *The New Republic; or Culture, Faith, and Philosophy in an English Country House.* (Chatto & Windus.)

the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, who stole away from plague-smitten Florence to forget all external evil in story-telling.

Mr. Arthur has produced a very learned and remarkable work.* The Vatican Council has now a large literature belonging to it, from the eight superb folios of Victor Froud to the recent articles of Cardinal Manning in the *Nineteenth Century*. Mr. Arthur has devoted years to the elaboration of his work, which deals mainly with the Syllabus and the Vatican Council, and incidentally with the Old Catholic movement and the Falk laws. 'I have often been reminded of an incident which occurred in Rome. One of our celebrated scholars hearing what I was engaged in, exclaimed, "O, theology!" Of course, he was fresh from home. Not many minutes before, a resident diplomatist, in whose house this took place, having heard me say, "I began the study of this subject as a religious question; *but*—" smiled, and said, "Yes; *but*—you will find it is all politics, and the further you get into it, the more purely political you will find it."' Mr. Arthur writes with some eloquence and considerable literary power, and with a thorough Protestantism which will be truly refreshing to many. He gives a good deal of attention to the mental attitude of such men as Dr. Newman and Bishop Dupanloup, Père Gratry and M. de Montalembert, who are not Ultramontanes, like Cardinal Manning and M. Veuillot. The practical argument against Rome, derived from the condition of Rome and the Campagna and many Roman districts, is pressed home, as it has been pressed before by Charles Dickens, by Carlyle, and by Macaulay. Our author thinks it possible that we are on the eve of a contest on an immense scale and of long duration. We are not sure, however, that it would be quite fair in any discussion to take dirty Italian villages as an argument against Romanism, any more than to take the Seven Dials as an argument against Protestantism. 'To avert any such repetitions of past horrors, to turn the war into a war of thought, a war with the sword of the writer and of the orator, instead of that of the Zouave and the dragoon, is an object in attempting to serve which, however humbly, a good man might be content to die.' The dry nature of the subject and the closely-printed pages of two thick volumes will be repellent to that easily-repulsed individual, the general reader; but they are like those Oriental edifices and our own English colleges, which, when once we have penetrated the forbidding portal, yield undreamt-of stores of instruction and delight.

In his work on the chapel in the Tower* Mr. Doyne Bell takes up very interesting ground. There is quite a voluminous literature belonging to the Tower—than which there is no sadder place on earth, as Macaulay said—but the recent restoration of the old church of St. Peter ad Vincula, a church associated with some of the most sorrowful reminiscences of English history, has given opportune occasion for a fresh volume. The series of historical sketches is well done, though in part they go over the same ground as that occupied by Mr. Hepworth Dixon and various other

* *The Pope, the Kings, and the People: a History of the Movement to make the Pope Governor of the World by a Universal Reconstruction of Society.* By William Arthur. (Mullan & Son.)

* *Notices of the Historic Persons buried in the Church of St. Peter ad Vincula, in the Tower of London.* By Doyne C. Bell, F.S.A. (John Murray.)

writers. The old chapel is known to have been in existence so far back as the time of King John. There was another chapel called St. John's, but it was a place of polite resort in the days when the Tower was a palace as well as a fortress, while the pathetic expression, 'ad Vincula,' points out that St. Peter's was specially intended for prisoners. Macaulay complained that this interesting little church was like the meeting-house in a manufacturing town; but he might have added that this meeting-house had been ennobled by some of the loftiest pulpit eloquence, in the words of Henry Melville, to which this age has listened. 'Thither,' says Macaulay, 'have been carried through successive ages, by the rude hands of gaolers, without one mourner following, the bleeding relics of men who had been the captains of armies, the leaders of parties, the oracles of senates, and the ornaments of courts.' In the recent restoration of the chancel it was found necessary to exhume the remains of Queens Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard, and the Dukes of Somerset, Northumberland, and Monmouth. They were afterwards restored, and a plan of their position will be copied on vellum and stored in the archives of the Tower. There is a deeply interesting but melancholy report made by Dr. Monatt, the Local Government Inspector: 'The bones found in the place where Queen Anne Boleyn is said to have been buried are certainly those of a female in the prime of life, all perfectly consolidated and symmetrical, and belonging to the same person. The bones of the head indicate a well-formed round skull, with an intellectual forehead, straight orbital ridge, large eyes, oval face, and rather square full chin—a well-formed woman of middle height, with a short and slender neck. The hand and feet bones indicate delicate and well-shaped hands and feet, with tapering fingers and a narrow foot.'

Mr. Manley's book on fishing* will have a great charm for many readers. Mr. Manley will, however, excuse us for saying that at present he lags considerably behind Izaak Walton, who, besides being an excellent fisherman, possessed the perfection of literary style. Mr. Manley's book is rather practical and anecdotic than anything else. Fishing in lonely secluded districts is closely akin to painting and poetry; but with Mr. Manley we are so busy with tackle and bait, that there is not much time left for anything else. His favourite river is the Thames, and in the Thames his favourite fish is the trout. He thinks that no trout in the world equals the genuine Thames trout. The misfortune is that there are so few of them. You may calculate the fish in almost any given range of water, and only about one fish in four is taken. We are sorry to hear that the Thames fishermen, although their charges for their punts and services are high, find the business too uncertain, and their number is decreasing. All Thames anglers will like Mr. Manley's book, if only for bringing so vividly to recollection old scenes on these pleasant waters.

Irish literature is at present cropping up in a most remarkable way. No less than three new works, of very varying value, have been lately issued. We give *place aux dames* to Miss Blackburne's *Lives of Illustrious Irishwomen.*† We need hardly say that it is a

* *Notes on Fish and Fishing.* By J. J. Manley, M.A. With Illustrations. (Sampson Low & Co.)

† *Illustrious Irishwomen.* By E. Owens Blackburne. 2 vols. (Tinsley Brothers.)

lively and amusing work, in character with the nature of the subject. With the exception of the last chapter on the Ladies of Llangollen, a subject which was much discussed during the recent meeting of the Archæological Society in that place, the work consists of narratives drawn from many sources, with much industry and good taste, of many Irishwomen, from the dim beginnings of history till the present time. There is a certain amount of originality in the Llangollen, which contains some original prose or verse by Canning and Wordsworth, and also a highly characteristic letter by Lady Mornington, the mother of the Duke of Wellington, on her son Arthur first entering the army. The memoirs of Lady Blessington and the late Lady Stirling-Maxwell are carefully and amply written, and will save the reader the trouble of referring to larger works and scattered authorities. The modern lives will prove more interesting than the somewhat archæological portion of the earlier volume, or even such a life as that of Grainne O'Mailley, the Pirate Queen, who, in the days of Queen Elizabeth, robbed with equal impartiality both the Spanish galleons and the English merchantmen. Miss Blackburne, doubtless with the amiable desire to render her book readable, discusses ladies who are perhaps hardly worth discussion—Peg Woffington, 'blue-eyed' Bellamy, and 'Perdita' Robinson. Here is the account of the last appearance of the famous or infamous Mrs. Robinson before her early death: 'On a table in one of the waiting-rooms of the opera-house was seated a woman of fashionable appearance, still beautiful, but not in the bloom of beauty's pride. She was not noticed, except by the eye of pity. In a few minutes two liveried servants came to her, and they took from their pockets long white sleeves, which they drew on their arms. They then lifted her up and conveyed her to her carriage; it was the then helpless paralytic Perdita.' Miss Blackburne gives us a thrilling sensational story, which really might be worked up on a much larger scale. It is not at all unlike the time-honoured story of the indiscreet young lady who penetrated into Bluebeard's cupboard. This is the story of the girlish escapade of one who subsequently became the Honourable Mrs. Aldworth, and who is known as the 'Lady Freemason,' the only lady who ever attained that honour. A Freemasons' lodge was to be held at the residence of her father, Lord Doneraile, and with characteristic female imprudence and curiosity she determined to secrete herself and watch the proceedings. She found the door guarded, and being unable to make her escape, she fainted away in terror. 'The members of the lodge reassembled, and deliberated as to what, under the circumstances, ought to be done. For two long hours the wretched girl listened to the angry discussion, and heard her death deliberately proposed and seconded. It is said that she was only saved from immediate death by the moving and earnest supplication of her younger brother. She was given the option of submitting to the Masonic ordeal to the extent she had witnessed, and if she refused, the brethren were again to consult.' We feel, however, considerable difficulty in believing that the Freemasons really thought of committing murder; a respect for their own necks might have led them to a different conclusion. The literary biographies of Mrs. Hemans and Lady Morgan

are satisfactory, but the subjects are trite.

There is no doubt that Fenianism has been extremely misunderstood in England. The character of the movement has sometimes been exaggerated, but more generally has been under-estimated. Mr. Rutherford's careful and impartial narrative* enables us to understand an important chapter of contemporary history. Fenianism, properly speaking, was an offshoot of O'Brien's rebellion in 1848. But it is more likely that Fenianism, or something like Fenianism, will for ages continue on both sides of the Atlantic. Even at the present moment it shows some symptoms of reviving both in Ireland and America. Mr. Rutherford truly says, 'Irishmen will continue to conspire until the term "Irishman," like the term "Lancashireman," becomes a mere designation of a birthplace, and ceases to signify, as it does now, a person whose name and interests are not imperial but local —until, in short, the patriotism of Irishmen is expanded beyond the narrow limits of their island by that which effected a similar change in Scotchmen: the influence of manufacturing and commercial prosperity.' The hero of the work, if we may use such an expression, is Stephens the Head-centre, who had his 1500*l.* a year for his trouble in treason-making. Mr. Rutherford believes that he is still living, but he has completely effaced himself. He lost heart in the cause, and was ignominiously deposed. Immense sums were raised, and Cluseret said, 'What fortunes in liquor disappeared down the throats of Irishmen!' Many also were paid immense sums from the Fenian treasury for 'secret service,' &c. It is only fair to say that there is a good deal of inner history, which has been kept secret a long time, such as the decidedly clever way in which the Government intercepted Fenian funds and contrived to obtain accurate information of their proceedings. The author also comments on the manner in which Irish juries never failed to convict prisoners with whom all Irishmen were supposed to sympathise. The account of Ribbonism, and of murders perpetrated by order of the Ribbon lodges, shows the existence of an *imperium in imperio.* The story of a man being deliberately put to death by three Irish gentlemen because he had behaved badly to a young lady shows that Ribbonism travelled far beyond the region of political matters. At the present moment things are apparently peaceful and prosperous in Ireland; the recent visits of the Duke of Connaught and of Mr. Gladstone may probably be numbered among later favourable instances. But in Ireland things often move in a vicious circle. A great deal of evil is due to absenteeism; on the other hand, it is hard to blame absenteeism while there is a continued insecurity of life and property. Mr. Rutherford's work is unavoidably dry, but it is written with a good deal of tact. It is of course anti-Fenian; at the same time, there is a side to Fenianism which may elict sympathy, and to this side he has done justice.

Mr. Sullivan's work, to a considerable degree, traverses the same ground as Mr. Rutherford's.* It is a still livelier work; it is written with considerable literary ability, and in a calm impartial tone which will be an agreeable surprise to many who are familiar

* *The Secret History of the Fenian Conspiracy: its Origin, Objects, and Ramifications.* By John Rutherford. (C. Kegan Paul & Co.)

* *New Ireland.* By A. M. Sullivan. 2 vols. (Sampson Low, Marston, & Co.)

with Irish politics. Assuredly Mr. Sullivan will not injure himself with the English public by the frankness of his language. 'I do not pretend to be dispassionate. I have borne an active part in some of the stormiest scenes of Irish public life for at least a quarter of a century; and I wish to hold my place as a man of decided views and strong convictions.' Mr. Gladstone has given public praise to Mr. Sullivan's book, which is reasonable enough, as Mr. Sullivan gives the highest praise to Mr. Gladstone's Irish legislation. As might naturally be expected from Mr. Sullivan's share in attempted legislation respecting liquor in Ireland, he devotes one of his earliest chapters to the career of the noble-minded Capuchin, Father Mathew. The mournful decade between 1847 and 1857, in which more than a million of people were cleared off the country by famine and eviction, is dwelt upon with characteristic eloquence and pathos. It is only necessary to enumerate the headings of different chapters—''Forty-eight,' 'The Encumbered Estates Act,' 'The Tenant League,' 'The Brass Band,' 'The Phœnix Conspiracy,' 'The Fenian Movement,' 'Home Rule'—to indicate how Mr. Sullivan takes in detail each great Irish movement, and in each case he does so in a graphic and animated way. The chapter with which we feel the least sympathy is that entitled 'The Scaffold and the Cell.' We do not see how the execution of the Manchester murderers could possibly be avoided. Moreover, although it seems an ungracious thing to say, we have no doubt that Mr. Sullivan himself was very properly imprisoned. We are glad to see that he acknowledges the leniency, and we imagine that his brief confinement considerably added to his moral culture. It must not, however, be imagined that these two volumes are entirely absorbed by Irish politics. Mr. Sullivan shows considerable literary skill in weaving in anecdote and dramatic action with the main staple of his work. A country like Ireland will never be deficient in these elements. The wild sensational story of the attempted abduction of Miss Arbuthnot by Squire Carden is told quite from a novelistic point of view, while the preceding chapter, 'The Suicide Banker,' which recounts the sinister career of John Sadleir, unites a political treatment with a story of the deepest tragedy. The chapter on the Kerry election relates electoral scenes which have always abounded in Irish history, but which have passed away for ever with the introduction of the Ballot Act. Mr. Sullivan naturally dwells with complacency on the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and we trust he is right in his opinion that it has issued far more prosperously than ever could have been expected by the Protestants of Ireland. He is of course delighted with the election of sixty Home Rulers in the last Parliament. This cheering fact imparts a roseate hue to his last pages. It is, however, a very serious consideration that if a general election took place on an early day, and the same number were returned, in all probability the balance of political forces would rest with the Irish contingent. The political organisation of the Irish in large English towns is another fact in the calculation. We mentally cheer Mr. Sullivan's perorating words: 'What the veil of the future may hide is not given to man to know. Enough for us that in skies long darkened and torn by cloud and storm thrice-blessed signs of peace

and hope appear. The future is with God.'

Mr. Sime's work on Lessing* is an admirable one. He has done well, and what no English writer has ever done before him, in bringing together a complete account of the life and writings of Lessing. Mr. Sime has wisely selected his ground as a great epoch in the history of literature, and the execution of his work is equal to the conception. Mr. Sime has no ordinary qualifications for his task. He is already the author of a valuable handbook on German history, and has a large and accurate acquaintance with German literature. At the same time he is intimately acquainted with all the currents of contemporary thought in our own day, and what we may call the 'modern tone' is very perceptible throughout all his work. Indeed, one of the few drawbacks which the work presents is that he weaves into the eighteenth century much that more properly belongs to the nineteenth. Mr. Sime, however, anticipates the objection in his preface, in which he claims for Lessing the ideal of the best qualities of the nineteenth century, qualities the most characteristic of our epoch. We think, too, that Mr. Sime is so exhaustive in his criticisms as to be sometimes exhausting. We question if it were worth while to subject the *Sara Sampson* and other minor works to careful analysis—life is too short for this order of criticism. Still it is thoroughly German, and contains morsels of criticism which Lessing himself might have written. We do not think that Mr. Sime adequately brings out the nature and extent of Lessing's classicalism. He discusses, indeed, the reference of Aristotle's *Poetics* in relation to Lessing's dramatic views; but we do not see, as we can in Milton's poems, which so easily render themselves into iambics under the hands of Greek scholars, how Greek tragic poetry thoroughly permeated his mind and was reproduced in his work. Neither are we quite able to lash ourselves into the same state of enthusiasm for Lessing as is exhibited by his accomplished biographer. We do not understand his lack of patriotism, his want of appreciation for mediæval architecture, his gambling and careless life, and the literary rather than the real tone with which he discussed many of the deepest subjects. Still, Lessing has done great work. Mr. Sime's introductory chapter is an excellent example of historical criticism. It displays that void and chaos from which the cosmos of German thought was to emerge. Lessing's father was a worthy *pasteur*, with considerable love and knowledge of letters, and the relations between father and son were to the last affectionate and most interesting. The good clergyman, however, did not shrink from a pious fraud when he lured his son home from what he considered bad company by fabricating a dangerous illness for the mother. At school he appears to have possessed a familiarity with Latin comic writers, which is very rare. As a lad he had a most genuine love of books. He had as a schoolboy the opportunity of revelling in great libraries, and said there was hardly a book in the University of Wittenberg which had not passed through his hands. When his portrait was taken as a child, he insisted on having 'a great pile of books about him.' In after life his passion for books made him a known figure in all the book-

* *Lessing.* By James Sime. 2 vols. (Trübner.)

auctions. He was one of the few genuine bookworms who rule their books and are not dominated by them. He possessed a thorough knowledge of English and French; and our own great writers, such as Pope and Burke, had an immense attraction for him. Lessing has this striking phrase about Englishmen, that they felt that 'mighty passions and sublime thoughts were no more for kings than for one taken from among themselves.' It may be said that by his *Literary Letters* he laid the foundation of literary criticism in Germany. At one time he had a shadowy chance of being appointed librarian to Frederick the Great. Mr. Sime—and it is time that we should give a specimen of his style—says: 'With a true instinct the German nation has fastened upon Lessing as the one contemporary of Frederick who stood on the same level with him, and wrought with equal splendid power in the great task of arousing Germany to new energy. Yet when an opportunity offered of serving the man whose name was to be so intimately associated with his own, Frederick coldly passed on, ignorant of the brilliant chance destiny had thrown in his way. He has been much blamed for this mistake, and generally for his complete indifference to the rising tide of intellectual life that surrounded him. It is, however, only fair to remember that in the days of Frederick's youth there was no real modern literature in Germany, and that he could hardly be expected, amid the pressure of later duties, to change his habits, and to give minute attention to the literary progress of his countrymen.' Lessing also became philosopher and theologian. We pass from his bold direct attacks upon Christianity to the thoughts wrapped up in *Nathan the Wise*, and to the kindred essay on the *Education of the Human Race*. This last essay has had a remarkable reference to our modern thought. In one special direction it may be said to have supplied Bishop Temple's essay which led off the *Essays and Reviews*, and in another direction it anticipated the theories of Lord Amberley's posthumous work. Lessing insisted on the comparative study of religions, from which no doubt a great deal is to be gained. But he will not accept the Christian religion as the one absolute religion. Like the Roman senate, he will be willing to accept Jesus if Jesus will be content to take His place with the other deities of the Pantheon. We cannot transcribe the following words without regret, and trust that they contain Mr. Sime's presentation of Lessing's views rather than of his own: 'It is not by trickery that the lives of vast masses of men are controlled from generation to generation. Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster, Jesus, Mahomet—these men have stamped their names upon the heart of the world; because, notwithstanding the superstition with which their influence is associated, they burned with enthusiasm for this or that aspect of spiritual truth. They came to deliver men from the yoke of vulgar custom; to open to them a large and free life.' This may be the philosophical, but it is not the Christian, way of looking at the matter. We cannot bracket the five 'men' all in a row. Unquestionably Buddha and Mahomet did appeal to some intellectual and moral needs of their time; but if we look at the lust, cruelty, and misery associated with their systems, the balance has been distinctly evil.

We do not dwell on the close

of Lessing's honoured and saddened life. Mr. Sime paints not how Lessing lived under what our author calls 'the two noblest passions of our nature,' but what we should prefer calling the two greatest principles of Christian life, 'a love of truth for its own sake, and an undying love of man.' Mr. Sime's entire reasoning on the revolutionary and destructive tendencies of Lessing's mind both demands and repays great attention. Mr. Sime has done most careful and painstaking work, though perhaps with a scarcity of what the Latin author of the dialogue on oratory terms *sententiæ et lumina*, and has earned his place in the foremost rank of our philosophical Radicals. Lessing achieved for Germany her literary empire in much the same way that Frederick laid the foundations of her military empire. A librarianship at last became Lessing's permanent position in this world, only it was much to be desired that it should be better endowed and in a better locality. It was at Wolfenbüttel—to be for ever associated with the *Wolfenbüttel Fragments*, which may be said to have laid the foundations of German neologianism—within the shadow of the Hartz Mountains, and within nine miles of the capital of Brunswick, that Lessing became librarian to the Duke. It was a flat uninteresting town, however—an unfortunate circumstance for Lessing, who delighted in society, and looked upon each of his fellow-creatures as a book of the great living library. Through his connection with the Duke of Brunswick he accompanied his son in an Italian journey, which had been an old aspiration of his; but as he was waiting to be married, he became very restive and uneasy in his prolonged tour. The lady whom, at the age of forty-seven, he married was a widow of forty, with several children; but he loved the children as his own, and the happiest year of his unhappy life was the single year of wedlock.

Out of the variety of works of fiction which have appeared we may select a few for special notice, which seem to have the merit, supreme in the eyes of novel-readers, of being thoroughly able to sustain the interest and making it difficult to lay the work down. The first of these shall be Mrs. Chapman's *Constant Heart*.* We have been never more 'taken in,' though we hardly wish to use the phrase in an unfavourable sense, in our lives. The commencement of the book is simple, pastoral, idyllic. We were reminded, and by no means unfavourably, of *Mary Powell*. We were considerably surprised when, in progressing with the story, we found ourselves concerned with the romantic details of an abduction case. We have all the details of a 'penny dreadful' illustrated with the warnings and consolations of true religion. The result is a somewhat tesselated mixture. Mrs. Chapman lays her story more than a century ago. It is quite possible that she may be deriving her narrative from facts. To those who search the records of crime it is quite conceivable that such a plot as that disclosed in these volumes may have actually been revealed. The authoress appears to have studied her period, and certainly contrives to give a remarkable degree of *vraisemblance* to her story. But we are not so sure that her story justifies her title. She kills off the heroine's true love, which we hold to be, artistically, a mistake; but in the last two pages we find

* *A Constant Heart.* By the Hon. Mrs. E. W. Chapman. (Henry S. King & Co.)

her married, and with a baby who is named after her first sweetheart. It is not every husband who would be so magnanimous as to allow this. If a heroine claims the appellation of a 'Constant Heart,' she ought to give the conventional justification by never marrying another person. A certain Mrs. Fleming is almost Mrs. Poyser-like in the story, which is sufficiently adventurous and attractive.

Then as an Irish story, one of several attractive Irish stories which have lately appeared, we have Mr. Thynne's novel, *For this Cause.** Mr. Thynne portrays Irish scenes and characters with undoubted realism. He succeeds rather in this direction than in his plot, which is better conceived than executed. An Irish squire has misappropriated trust-money, and to postpone the time of payment he encourages litigation respecting a will. He has a brother, however, a rich Australian squatter, who makes things square, but insists, nevertheless, that his brother should go out to Australia, and he himself should become an Irish squire. Further than this it would hardly be fair to anticipate the plot. The Australian is of opinion that he is as well informed respecting various subjects as if he had lived in Cornwall, and that all his political opinions have a peculiar ripeness and value of their own. We believe that this opinion is not at all an uncommon one among the colonists, and it is here forcibly stated by one of them to another: 'We—I, you, and others who have had a European birth and a European culture up to manhood—continue to watch the issues of those subjects on which we have expended youthful thought and even enthusiasm. Further, we are removed to a distance from the din, the turmoil, the obscuring smoke of the battle itself. More than all, I believe we do not get our information by infinitesimally fragmentary instalments day by day, the instalments of to-day contradicting or upsetting those of yesterday, but in larger and more continuous portions. Say we miss some of the pettier details; all the more we see the grand movements, and whither they ultimately tend.' It will be perceived that Mr. Thynne writes in a vigorous thoughtful way, and his pictures of Dublin life, whether in Merrion-square or in the slums, are exceedingly effective.

Mr. Jenkins is a novelist who always writes with a purpose, and what he gains in purpose he frequently loses in the construction of his story. But we never read him without pleasure, though we often think him exaggerated, and perhaps never more exaggerated than upon the present occasion.* Mr. Jenkins is trying to do in a novel what before now he has attempted in a pamphlet—to expose the evils of exporting Hindoo and Coolie labour into British Guiana and the West Indies. It is not that he objects altogether to a Coolie system, which he thinks 'might be made a system of incalculable blessing to Asiatics.' It is his weakness, looking at his work as a political pamphlet, that he bases his conclusions on facts which he explains to be fictions. The wrongs which he enumerates are not practically found in British Guiana; they are collected from many sides, and all deposited there 'at one fell swoop.' But he knows the country, and writes pictorially and energetically; there are many

* *For this Cause.* A novel. By Robert Thynne. (Sampson Low & Co.)

* *Lutchmee and Dilloo: a Story of West Indian Life.* By E. Jenkins, M.P. (W. Mullan & Son.)

scenes of pathos and eloquence, and his work may tend to abolish or modify various existing evils.

A good sea novel is always a great treat. A social history of the British navy might be constructed from a combination of such novels as Smollett's, Marryat's, and Hannay's. Of late the merchant marine has been more employed by novelists than the royal navy, because the roughest points of real life are salient, and Mr. Plimsoll has shown how a vein of 'purpose' might be introduced into them. The narrative* of the fate of the Grosvenor is a very appalling one, and the author certainly contrives to rivet the attention of the reader. In the first volume we have an evil captain cheating his crew out of their proper provisions, a smack is run down and sunk, a wreck is left unaided, there is a storm, and mutiny and murder. Further than this it would hardly be fair to trace the narrative. It is marked throughout by capital sea description and an incessant variety of incident.

The *Handbook to the Picture Galleries of Europe* (Macmillan & Co.), by Miss Kate Thompson (daughter of Sir Henry Thompson), is invaluable to the lover of art in his rambles over foreign collections. Compact and clear in its form and arrangement, the brief sketches of the various schools of painting, the careful chronological tables, and the numbered references to famous pictures, make it at once a most serviceable guide and remembrancer.

Mr. Ballingall's *Edinburgh: its Past and its Present* (William Oliphant & Co.), is a handsome illustrated volume on the associations and surroundings of the old gray city—dedicated to its citizens and to 'all who love its beauties and its memories.' The engravings are numerous and interesting. The book altogether is a pleasant *souvenir* of the Scottish capital and its romantic environs.

Our Trip to Blunderland, by Jean Jambon (William Blackwood & Sons), is a *jeu d'esprit*, we understand, from the pen of a distinguished legal functionary of the North. It belongs to the class of pleasantries which *Alice in Wonderland* has made popular. The sixty illustrations from the pencil of Mr. Charles A. Doyle show the power of an artist whom we hope to see coming more to the front one of these days. The 'extension motions,' pp. 172 and 206, are very clever.

Messrs. Griffith & Farran maintain their ancient fame at the Christmas season by a variety of bright wholesome books, from which, at the moment, we select three: *Wilton of Cuthbert's*, by the Rev. H. C. Adams, is a tale of undergraduate life thirty years ago. To those who know university and to those who do not, it is an agreeable book; perhaps also a useful one to place in the hands of a young man before he goes up. The *Three Admirals, and the Adventures of their Young Followers*, by W. H. G. Kingston, has all the old fire and dash of this veteran writer for boys. The woodcut of the shark, where 'each dealt him a blow across the tail,' is the sort of drawing which suits all thorough boys. *Those Unlucky Twins*, by Annette Lyster, although a little book, deserves special notice. It is a charming text; and there are ten illustrations, by John Proctor, far above the average of juvenile books.

Another of the fresh, attractive,

* *The Wreck of the Grosvenor: an Account of the Mutiny of the Crew, and the Loss of the Ship, when trying to make the Bermudas.* 3 vols. (Sampson Low, Marston, & Co.)

liberally-illustrated books which we owe to Dr. Manning and the Religious Tract Society is *English Pictures drawn with Pen and Pencil.* Beginning with the Thames and ending with the Isle of Wight, we have a series of skilfully-grouped rambles over England, introducing 'Shakespeare's Country,' 'The Country of Bunyan and Cowper,' 'The Peak,' 'The Lakes,' &c. It is a volume which will foster the desire to know the beauties of our own country, and help to point out what is best worth seeing. The *Home Naturalist*, by Harland Coultas, from the same Society, gives practical instructions for collecting, arranging, and preserving natural objects. There are plain directions to the young naturalist concerning all kinds of collections,—caterpillars, beetles butterflies, plants, woods, and animals,—as well as the aquarium and insectarium — altogether a good and comprehensive book of its class.

Two groups from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge deserve a word of hearty commendation. These are: 1. *Ancient History from the Monuments*—Babylonia, Greek cities, &c.; 2. *Non-Secular Religious Systems*—Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam and its founder. These able, well-condensed, and low-priced little volumes, by such authors as Professor Monier Williams, Mr. Rhys Davids, and the late George Smith, are really valuable contributions to popular literature.

MUSICAL PITCH.

It is well known to musicians that during the last century there has been a gradual rise in the pitch of musical notes: that is, the note which formerly used to be regarded, say as A, has gradually become considered flatter and flatter; so that the sound produced by a given key on a modern instrument is sensibly sharper and more acute than that given by the corresponding key on an older instrument. To so great an extent has this variation now arrived, that the highest concert pitches of the present day are at least a tone above those in use in 1750: that is, the note which now would be regarded as B flat, or even almost A natural, was considered to be C natural or close to it in the first half of last century, whilst even during the last fifty years there has been a rise of from a semitone to a semitone and a half in pitch. One effect of this is that the music of the older composers as now played produces an entirely different effect from that which it was intended to do; it sounds as though it were transposed into a higher key; whilst music originally written for fair average tenors and sopranos can now be efficiently sung only by exceptional voices, the highest notes, which formerly were fairly in reach of ordinary cultivated voices, being now made so high through the raising of the pitch as to be expressed only as screeches and notes unpleasant through their too great shrillness, and consequent deficiency in richness and fulness of tone. This difference of pitch is acoustically expressed by saying that the number of vibrations per second required to give a certain note is now considerably greater than was formerly the case. A number of exact comparative measurements of pitches in use at various dates and in different places has been recently made by Mr. Alexander Ellis, the materials for the investigation being derived from standard organ-pipes, tuning-forks, &c., carefully preserved by their various owners. Thus, for

instance, the high modern pitches of the last twenty years, such as those of Chappell, Collard, Broadwood, Albert Hall (Wagner's Concerts), Crystal Palace (March 1877), Brussels, Philharmonic, Dresden, Kneller Hall, Leipsic (Gewandhaus), the army regulation, and the Society of Arts (Allen's, Griesbach's, and Cramer's C's), give to the C a number of vibrations varying from 538 to 546; whilst medium pitches, such as Broadwood's medium, St. Paul's (March 1877), Gotha and Brunswick (1859), Hullah (1843), Dresden (1859), low pitch Dresden (1869), Paris Opera (1826), give from 527 to 537 vibrations. Most of the older pitches, however, are considerably lower than these: thus the Berlin (1834), Vienna (1834), French normal (1859), Broadwood's low pitch (instrumental), Broadwood's vocal pitch, the Westminster Abbey organ (1877), Sir George Smart's Philharmonic (1826), Gaud's Paris pitch (1834), and Petitbout's Paris pitch (1834), give only 516 to 526 vibrations per second. The 'Handel pitches' are lower still, the Berlin (1806-14), Philharmonic (1813), Mozart's, Handel's (1751, taken from Handel's own fork), and the Plymouth Theatre pitch (1800), giving only 507 to 512 vibrations, Handel's fork being the lowest; whilst Glück's pitch gave only 491, Father Schmidt's (Hampton Court organ) 479, and Trinity College, Cambridge (1755), as measured by Dr. R. Smith, the low number of 467, or a note scarcely any higher than the A natural of the high modern pitches. A long and exhaustive paper on this subject was read before the Society of Arts some little time ago, and caused considerable criticism on the mode of measurement adopted by Mr. Ellis, whose results as to the absolute pitch of certain standards adopted by different makers of musical instruments differed somewhat (by three or four vibrations) from those ascertained by other experimentalists. But even admitting that an error of this magnitude attached to Mr. Ellis's measurements, it would be but small as compared with the great differences noticed; whilst, on the other hand, it appears by no means unlikely that the error, whatever its cause, attaches at least equally to the other measurements; the question turning on the possibility of measuring accurately by the ear the number of musical beats in twenty seconds, and depending on whether eighty or seventy-nine and a quarter beats were accurately given in this period of time by the instrument (known as Appunn's *tonometer*) employed by Mr. Ellis. This tonometer was exhibited in the Loan Exhibition of scientific apparatus at South Kensington. It consists of a series of harmonium reeds made to sound in a perfectly uniform manner by directing on them an equable blast of wind from an air-chest of special construction; sixty-five of these reeds are arranged somewhat as in a harmonium, so that any one or more can be made to sound by opening the appropriate valves by a 'pull' like a door-bell or like the 'stop' of an organ, the sound continuing until the wind-chest is empty. No bellows-blowing is performed during the comparison of two notes, as that would introduce a variation in pressure in the blast, and slightly alter the notes. The reeds are so tuned that each one 'beats' four times in a second with either of the adjacent reeds, and therefore differs therefrom in rate of vibration by four vibrations per second in excess or defect. The sixty-fifth reed is exactly the octave of the first, and conse-

quently makes 256 vibrations more per second, wherefore the first reed must make 256 vibrations, and the sixty-fifth 512 vibrations, or double the number made by the first, of which it is the octave. Hence the numbers of vibrations made by the various reeds are 256, 260, 264, 268, to 512 respectively. In order to determine the exact pitch, say, of a tuning-fork, all that is required is to sound the fork together with one of the reeds of the tonometer, so that the two beat together at a rate of somewhere near four (say between two and six) times per second. Hence the reed chosen vibrates as many times per second more or less than the fork as is indicated by the number of beats. To distinguish which is the sharper, the fork is sounded with the next adjacent reed on each side: if the fork is sharper than the first reed, the number of beats given with the adjacent sharper reed is less than that given with the original reed; if flatter, it is greater, and *vice versâ* with the adjacent flatter reed. In this way the absolute pitch of any given fork is readily ascertainable with considerable precision, provided the tonometer itself has been so constructed as to give exactly four beats per second with each pair of reeds. In the instrument used by Mr. Ellis this precision was apparently attained, each pair of reeds being repeatedly tested, and the number of beats in twenty seconds accurately counted. Manifestly, however, if the watch or pendulum beating seconds employed were incorrect by a minute fraction of a second, this verification method would not be an accurate test of the absolute number of vibrations per second given by each reed, although it would properly verify their relative rates of vibration, the difference between each pair being as much more or less than four vibrations as corresponds to the difference between the interval of time, supposed to be a second, whilst verifying the instrument, and the true second. Accordingly fresh verifications are being undertaken by Mr. Ellis, with a view of definitely settling the question as to whether his measurement of 439 vibrations for the French normal A (1859), or the hitherto accepted value 435 (corresponding respectively to 522·06 and 517·31 for C), is actually correct.

The final settlement of a standard invariable pitch is a great desideratum for musical purposes; the discrepancy in pitch between the periods when Handel and Mendelssohn wrote *renders it impossible for the music of these two composers to be properly executed at the same concert,* when instruments incapable of adjustment between the pieces (such as a piano or organ and many wind instruments) are employed in the orchestra, or for the accompaniments. Handel wrote at a time when the loud and sustained F sharp, G, and A (above the treble staff) in the Hallelujah Chorus, although requiring good vocal powers on the part of the voices, were not out of the reach of ordinary well-trained chorus-singers (*i.e.* not out of their reach so far as the production of a full-sounding rich note, quite different from the locomotive-whistle-like upper notes now often heard). At the present day, however, and with the modern high concert pitches, these high sustained notes are quite impracticable to average voices without sacrificing much of the effect intended; a screech is arrived at more ear-piercing than satisfactory to the musical critic. On the other hand, Mendelssohn

wrote and thought in the pitch of the Leipsic Gewandhaus (A=452·3 instead of 426, corresponding to C=538 instead of 506·7), not much inferior to our modern pitches, whilst Costa thinks in the high pitch itself. If attempts were made to render Mendelssohn's music with instruments tuned to the pitch requisite for Handel's, each note would be a full semitone lower than intended by the composer; the effect would be wholly altered; and in many instances a fine low rich note intended by the composer would only be rendered as a weak, gruff, unmusical sound. The music of older composers still, such as Glück and Gibbons, suffers greatly by the high modern pitches, and, indeed, often is impracticable for ordinary voices, or if rendered, produces but little of the proper effect: without doubt this is partly the reason why the older music is comparatively seldom heard at concerts.

These modern extremely high pitches are not used to any extent in the continental opera-houses and concert-rooms. At Munich, Würtemberg, Vienna, Baden, Milan, and St. Petersburg, the medium pitch (French normal, A=439, corresponding to C=522) is compulsory in the court theatres, this result having been arrived at, to a great extent, through the common sense of the directors and singers themselves; several noted English choirs, *e.g.* St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey, also refuse to sing to these high pitches. When an artist not accustomed to such a pitch as Broadwood's high (C=545) comes over to England, considerable inconvenience is often caused by the change; and not improbably the short stay and non-return after one season of many artistes is as much due to this as to the ill-effects of our misty and foggy climate on their delicate vocal organs. A stringed instrumentalist, such as a violinist, has to alter his strings to thinner ones, or to screw up more tensely, and so injure the tone, in order to accommodate himself to our orchestras; whilst wind instrumentalists have to provide numerous crooks and alteration-joints, and in many cases entirely different instruments to play on. It was estimated that to change the pitch of the Dresden theatre from A=452 to A=439 (just a quarter of a tone lower) would cost about 900*l.*; whilst a noted concertina player (Mr. Blagrove) found it necessary to take thirteen different concertinas of varying pitches with him on a professional tour, in order to suit himself to the exigencies of different concert-rooms. Of course no adoption of standards of pitch will prevent the inconvenience of an organ rising gradually in pitch in the course of an evening, as the room gets hotter and the air proportionately rarefied. Occasionally this alteration in tone becomes so marked, as to cause serious discrepancies between the organ and other musical instruments towards the close of the concert, even when perfectly in tune at the beginning. This is one of the chief reasons why a performance including an organ and other instruments is not always as successful to the musical ear as might be desired.

LONDON: ROBSON AND SONS, PRINTERS, PANCRAS ROAD, N.W.